

Current Anecdotes

A Preacher's Magazine of Illustrations, Homiletics,
* * Sermons, and Methods of Church Work * *

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Number 3

Seed Thoughts for Sermons.

BY ARTHUR T. PIERSON.

THE UNFINISHED WILL. (123)

Ecll. 9:12; Job 34:20.

Peter the Great was a man of autocratic will; he died, however, without making what is technically called a will. Frantically calling for a slate, he wrote, "Give all to —" but the dying hand, paralyzed, never completed the sentence.

THE VANITY OF ALL SCEPTICAL ASSAULTS. (129)

"You might as well attempt to place your shoulder against the burning wheel of the mid-day sun, and hurl it back into night, as to destroy the Scriptures, or faith in the Living God," so said Dr. Breckenridge.

GIVING. (130)

Mal. 1:13; Mal. 3:10.

On one occasion, when a plea was being made for some philanthropic enterprise, the Chairman said, "All we want is a four and three naughts," meaning £4,000. Douglas Jerrold called out, "Put me down for one of the *naughts*." A good illustration of the way some people give to a collection.

DREAD OF DEATH. (131)

Psa. 73:19; Job 18:11.

Louis XIV, looking out at St. Germain, saw a building in the distance, and said, "What building is that?" "Sire, that is the church of St. Denis, where your royal ancestors are buried." He could not endure the sight of a mausoleum which reminded him of his own frailty, and he built another palace with an entirely different outlook.

ALL CHARACTER WILL NOT BEAR DISCLOSURE. (132)

Jer. 9:4, 5; Psa. 51:6.

The false prophet, Mokarma, wore on his brow a silver veil, claiming that, if the veil should be lifted, the light would strike men blind. But it was discovered that, on his brow, instead of celestial lustre, were the white scales of a leper.

A JEWISH LEGEND. (133)

It is said that Ezekiel once raised from the dead a number of his followers, but the resuscitated retained the look of the corpse, and the smell of the grave.

HUMAN JOYS DO NOT LAST. (134)

Ecll. 2:11; Ecll. 2:16.

"Do you see anything lacking in this imperial show," said one citizen to another, in the midst of the splendors of a Roman festival. "Yes," said the other, "it lacks *permanence*."

"One difference between General Grant and me," said General Sherman, "is this: I am not afraid of dangers I *can see*, he is not afraid of dangers he *cannot see*."

MOSES AND HIS TRAINING. (135)

Acts 7:37.

Mr. Alexander Stewart, of Glasgow, has beautifully said that there are three periods in the life of Moses, each of them 40 years long. The first 40 years were spent in discovering that he was *somebody*; the second 40 in discovering that he was *nobody*; and the third in discovering that God is *Everybody in One*, and can make use of *nobody* if he pleases.

A GREAT FACT ABOUT THE BIBLE. (136)

Two and a half million copies of the Revised Version of the New Testament were either bought or ordered by English speaking people within 48 hours after it was declared ready for delivery. And the whole of the Revised New Testament was cabled across the Ocean, and appeared the next day in the *Chicago Daily Tribune*, complete.

THE WORK OF LOVE. (137)

1 Thess. 1:3; 1 Cor. 13:13 R. V.

A century ago, in Northern Europe, stood an old Cathedral upon one of whose arches was sculptured a face of singular beauty, only seen at a certain angle when the sunlight slanted through an open window and only then for a few moments.

When the Cathedral was building, an old man, broken with years, asked to be allowed

to work on it. He was only allowed to work under the shadows of the vaulted roof, where his dim sight and trembling hand could do no harm. One day he was found dead, but on the top of a pillar was the face of one he had loved and lost. And all who see it say, "This is best of all. Love wrought it."

PATIENCE OF HOPE. (138)

In 1683, Vienna was besieged by the Turks, and all hope was centered on John Sobieski, King of Poland. They begged him to come to their help—and during the long siege of months they kept watch, and on September 11th the watchers on the ramparts saw the flashing armour of the Poles, on the slopes of Mount Kalmiburg. That very day he repulsed the Turks and set them free.

THE DANGER OF WORLDLINESS. (139)

Prov. 4: 23; Deut. 11: 16.

The wife of an American preacher had two beautiful daughters, who grew up very worldly, and married men as worldly as themselves, to the great grief of their parents. Their mother, on her death bed, acknowledged that she was wholly to blame for the worldliness of her daughters, that she had in her heart desired for them beauty, worldly culture and marriages of prominence. She had her heart's desire, but she lost her daughters for Christ.

OUR OWN MERIT WILL NOT AVAIL WITH GOD. (140)

Suppose an Indian to collect all his glass beads, imagining them some great treasure, and go to New York to trade with them, and come back rich. He goes and offers them at some great emporium, and they are worthless.—H. W. Beecher.

FAITH. (141)

The profligate Louis XIV of France, one day, nearing death, asked Pere Tellier, his confessor, for absolution. "Do you suffer much?" "No, that is what troubles me. I should like to suffer more for the expiation of my sins." So poor mortals, after a life of sin, upon the brink of hell, undertake to make expiation of their sins by their own sufferings, instead of taking refuge in the vicarious suffering of the Lord Jesus Christ.

SIMPLICITY OF TRUST. (142)

Tell a drowning man to trust you to save him—but you cannot unless he will cease struggling. This is

1. Inviting him to believe your word.
2. To trust your strength and love.
3. To renounce every other hope.

IGNORANCE AND INDIFFERENCE.

Hos. 4: 6; Luke 12: 48. (143)

A missionary meeting was held in a little town in New Jersey. One of the richest men in the state was there, worth millions of dollars. The pastor had some photographs which he invited the congregation afterward to come

up and see. This old man went up to look at them. He saw the picture of some Chinese men and women, showing their poverty and need, and this was his only exclamation: "Well, ain't them queer looking folks!"

The pathetic thing about it was not his poor English, but that all the photograph awakened in him was an exclamation of surprise and curiosity at their dress! He had no real knowledge of their condition, yet some day he will have to give an account for neglect of them. The meeting could awaken in him no real sympathy that would draw out from his heart a prayer for them.—Robt. Speer.

CONSECRATED WEALTH. (144)

There died lately in Indianapolis an eccentric old man, Simon Yandes, a graduate of Harvard, who had acquired a considerable fortune. His estate was found to have dwindled, to about thirty thousand dollars. During his lifetime he had given to the Presbyterian Board fully one hundred thousand, and to the Methodist and Baptist Boards like sums. He had made provision that the work of several home missionary superintendents in the State of Indiana were cared for by endowments. During the last years of his life he would go to a restaurant and pay only twelve cents a meal, to have so much more to give toward spreading the Gospel of his Saviour around the world. It is not a matter of giving much or little, but how far we regard all we have even what is least, as not ours but his.—Robt. E. Speer.

ANSWERING ONE'S OWN PRAYER.

Luke 18: 22; Prov. 21: 13. (145)

A little while ago there was a "carnival" where I live for the benefit of a local hospital. One morning was given up to the children, and my own were much interested. That day my little five-year-old boy began to count his money that he was going to spend at the fair. I said: "Do you not think you had better put some of that in your missionary bank?"

"Oh, no," he said, "I need it all."

"But would you not have a happier day if you shared it with the other children?"

"No, I don't think so."

"Well, let us say our prayers."

He confined his prayers that morning to our immediate family circle—father, mother, sisters, and the little children he played with.

I said: "You are not going to leave out the little children on the other side of the world?"

He replied: "No, father, I am saying this prayer."

"But don't you think you ought to remember them?"

"I am going to the fair," was the reply.

But the lad's conscience was tender, and by and by he prayed for the other little children—"O God bless these other children as much as you have blessed me!"

When he got up from his knees he said: "Father, I think I will put some of that money in the missionary bank."—Robt. E. Speer.

Illustrations from "Kadesh-Barnea."

BY J. WILBUR CHAPMAN.

WILLING. (147)

John 7: 17; James 4: 7, 8; 2 Chron. 15: 2.

If you should find it impossible to submit your will to God in everything, then it may be that Mr. Meyer's very significant expression may prove a star of hope to you in your darkness and despair. If you are not willing to submit everything, then (he has said) offer this prayer, "Lord, I am willing to be made willing about everything," and the victory will be yours.

PROTECTION. (148)

1 Pet. 1: 5; Jude 24; Psa. 9: 9; Psa. 91: 3-7.

Some years ago the king of Abyssinia took a British subject, by the name of Campbell, prisoner, carried him to a fortress, and put him in a dungeon, without cause assigned. It took six months for Great Britain to find it out, and then they demanded his instantaneous release. King Theodore refused, and in less than ten days ten thousand British soldiers were on shipboard and sailing down the coast. They disembarked, and marched seven hundred miles beneath the burning sun up the mountains to the very dungeon where the prisoner was held, and there they gave battle. The gates were torn down, and presently the prisoner was lifted upon their shoulders, and carried down the mountains, and placed upon the white-winged ship, which sped him in safety to his home. And it cost the English government twenty-five millions of dollars to release that man.

I belong to a better kingdom than that; and do you suppose for a moment that earthly powers will protect their subjects and that God will leave me without help?

MEEKNESS. (149)

Jas. 3: 13; Mk. 3: 17; Luke 9: 54; John 13: 23.

Meekness is not, as some have supposed, lifelessness, but the word "meekness" as used in the Bible is the same Greek word that is used in Xenophon's "Anabasis" for the training of horses; and the Scripture idea of a meek man is a tamed man. If this be true, it is not discouraging if one has a fiery temper or a miserable disposition.

A fiery temper is a good thing if controlled, instead of controlling us. It is like the steam in an engine. It really serves to send us on to greater victories.

The Influence of Teachers.

BY DAVID GREGG, D. D.

I cannot resist the impulse of the moment to make an appeal to those who fill professors' chairs in universities, and the positions of teachers in schools. My fellowmen, you are thinkers. You are leaders. Our young men and young women look up to you with admiration. You have a mighty influence over them. Would it not be noble in you to use this influence in making God the mightiest thought in the souls of your students? In what way can you better glorify God and serve those whom you have been

appointed to lead? You can make the sciences speak for God, and you can make Nature teach his divine over-rule.

THE UNIVERSE ON TIME. (150)

A friend of mine made a visit to Harvard University. Harvard just purchased a new astronomical instrument, and the object of his visit was to see how the instrument worked. The professor and his assistant told him that, according to the astronomical calculations, a star was due at 5:20 p. m. At the appointed hour the instrument was directed to the star. It was agreed that when the star, which came swinging along the heavens, crossed the spider-web line stretched across the lens of the instrument, the professor who looked through the instrument should pronounce the word "Here," and that the assistant, who watched the second hand of the clock, should let the hammer which he held in his hand fall upon the marble table the instant the clock registered 5:20 p. m.

The man who was to speak the word "Here" could not see the clock; he was looking at the star. The man who was to let the hammer fall could not see the star; he was looking at the second hand of the dial plate. There was an impressive silence for a time. The clock was quietly ticking here in the observatory, but out there, in the heavens, millions of miles away, God's star was rolling in on time, as God bade it ages and ages ago. As the waiting was prolonged, the silence became almost painful. Thus it was when suddenly two sounds broke the stillness. These two sounds were the voice of the professor and the rap of the assistant's hammer. The two sounds, the "Here" and the "rap" were positively simultaneous, for God's guidance of the stars, according to the testimony of science, is perfectly accurate.

That professor had a magnificent opportunity to speak a word for God. If, as a man of God, he had opened the Bible and read: "He bindeth the sweet influence of the Pleiades. He looseth the bands of Orion, he bringeth Mazereth in his seasons and he guideth Arcturus with his suns. He telleth the number of the stars and calleth them all by name; great is our Lord and of great power, his understanding is infinite." If he had solemnly and reverently said: "Young men, let God who guides the stars so successfully guide you; pray to him as I pray to him," there would have been a score of new prayers offered to God that night, and that scientific evening spent with the telescope would have been a religious influence to the end of many a life.

JESUS ONCE FOR OUR SALVATION, composed by Felice Anerio (1600) and edited by John E. West. In these days when the ancient music for the church is coming to have its excellences more recognized than in the past half century, a composition by the successor of Palestrina as *compositore* to the Pontifical choir at Rome cannot fail to be interesting, and especially as it is edited for the use of choirs of our own day. Preachers will improve the effect of the efforts of their choirs by suggesting that the leader send his name to the address below, mentioning Current Anecdotes. The leader will receive copies of anthems, solos, etc. (Novello, Ewer & Co., 21 East 17th St., New York.)

Astronomical Illustrations.

From "Our Own and Other Worlds," Eaton & Mains, New York.

JOSEPH HAMILTON.

ACCURACY OF THE EARTH'S MOTION. (151)

Ps. 19:4-6; Job 26:7, 10.

Now there are two curious and beautiful things about the movement of the earth which we must notice. One is the amazing accuracy with which these revolutions are made. They are made, not only to the minute, but to the second. So far as known, the earth has never been a second ahead of time, or behind it. Hence we set our watches by the sun, as we say; but it is the movement, not of the sun but of the earth, that is so accurate.

When we speak of the rising and setting sun, therefore, we mean that the sun seems to rise and set. Strictly speaking, he does neither; it is the earth that turns to the sun, and turns away from him. And so, the Bible uses the same expression; for it was necessary above all things that the Bible should use language that people could understand. If it had spoken of the earth moving around the sun men would have been confused, and could not have believed the record. Not for thousands of years did anybody know that it was the earth that moved. A negro preacher had a great sermon on "The Sun do Move"; the simple-minded man taking the biblical words in the literal, not in the popular sense. The same devotion to the letter, instead of to the spirit of the word, has led more educated men into worse errors.

Now, just as the earth moves round on her axis with such surprising exactness as to time, so she moves round the sun with the same unerring regularity. We are accustomed to say that she moves round the sun in 365 days. But that is not exactly correct. She takes 365 days, and a few hours, and a few minutes, and a few seconds, and a few fractions of a second. The time, as near as can be computed, is 365.2564 days! Yes, and she keeps to that time without any deviation for thousands and thousands of years!

And yet, this surprising accuracy of the earth's movement becomes more surprising still when another circumstance is taken into account. We would naturally suppose that to maintain such uniform accuracy, the earth must move exactly at the same rate of speed through her entire course round the sun. But, strange to say, this is not the case. Her path round the sun is not a complete circle, but an ellipse, so at the flat parts of the circle she draws a little nearer to the sun. Now, the nearer she comes to him, the more he attracts her. The result is, she moves faster until she gets farther out of his range, and then she goes slower. Yet, in spite of this disturbance in her movement, she keeps the time with unflinching accuracy. If she goes faster at two places in her course, she slacks her speed through the rest of the course, and still completes the circuit to the fraction of a second. What amazing forethought, and wisdom, and power are here displayed! Truly, "an undevout astronomer is mad."

THE SOLID EARTH. (152)

Job 38:4-6; 2 Sam. 22:8; Judges 5:4, 5;
Psa. 97:4, 5.

We speak of the solid earth, and the everlasting hills; but there is no solid earth, and there are no everlasting hills. We are living, instead, on a thin crust or shell, which in proportion to the size of the earth is far thinner than the shell of an egg; in fact the shell of a bubble is a much nearer proportion. Like a bubble, too, the shell sometimes bursts. For, but a little way beneath our feet there is a raging, molten sea of fire, which is ever in danger of bursting the shell and enveloping the world in flames.

We see plain evidence of this in every earthquake and volcano. Yet though the volcano is so dangerous, it acts as a safety valve in giving vent to this surging tide of fire. In the year 1169 Mount Etna poured forth a torrent of lava which destroyed the city of Catania with 15,000 inhabitants. In 1779 there was an eruption of Vesuvius, with showers of stones and a river of lava from which the flames rose two miles in height. An earlier eruption of Vesuvius buried the city of Pompeii under twenty feet of ashes, so that even the site of the city was not discovered for sixteen hundred years. To crown all, we have had just lately the fearful eruption of Mount Pelee, which overwhelmed a city of twenty thousand inhabitants, of whom it is said that but one man survived.

These awful visitations show that the thin shell of the earth has not thickened much during many centuries past. Calculations have been made to show about how thick is the shell that separates us from this tornado of fire. Every miner knows that the mine grows hotter the deeper he goes down. It is calculated that the temperature rises about one degree for each thirty yards we go beneath the surface. At this rate water would boil at two miles down; iron would melt at seven miles; and the hardest substances we know would melt at twenty-eight miles. Therefore, the whole interior of the earth below twenty-eight miles must be an ocean of fire. But what are twenty-eight miles compared with the whole volume of the earth? Only the one three-hundredth part of the earth's diameter. Was I not right, then, in comparing the earth to a bubble?

POWER AND SPIRIT. (153)

Psa. 8:3-6; Gen. 1:26.

A vast deal of the comfort of the world depends on getting a ready and adequate supply of light, heat and power. And the world has many sources from which these things can be procured. We have gone through quite an evolution in our application to various sources of supply. Our most primitive experience was in cutting down our timber, and turning it into light and heat, and later into power; and we are not quite through that epoch yet. Then there was a very early at-

tempt to use water power. It had a very simple application at first; now we see its latest and grandest development in Niagara. Then we called on the wind to grind our corn, and wait our ships across the seas. Then came the great era of coal, which may last a long while yet. Then from coal, gas was evolved; and later, taken ready made from the earth. Then petroleum gave us a new departure, and in many directions is supplanting coal. The tides, meanwhile, have been appealed to, but not with great success. Greatest of all, so far, is the era of electricity, the most mysterious and powerful thing that man has handled yet. Or, possibly, radium may rank with electricity in point of mystery.

But is electricity the final thing? Is it our last and completest motive power? Is there not one other greater and grander force than any that we have yet harnessed to our will? May not our last resource be the sun himself? It is possible to construct a large burning glass by which a most intense heat is procured. The heat thus developed melts the hardest substances known to us, such as agate, platinum, diamond, and so on. In this direction, it seems to me, will yet be found the motive power of the world.

And thus the world moves on, till that day when the sun himself shall grow dim with age, and nature shall sink in years. One thing then shall still survive—the immortal spirit of man, which is superior to all material force. Man himself is the supreme wonder. He will survive, “unhurt amid the war of elements, the wreck of matter, and the crash of worlds.”

THE SUN. (154)

Mal. 4: 2; Psa. 84: 11; Judges 5: 31.

The sun is the very life of our world. He lights and heats the world by his rays. Not only so, but by the vegetation he called forth away in the distant past, the coal was formed which gives us additional heat and light. And his beams are so charged with color, that all the beauty of our vegetation comes from him. Then by his attractive power he holds our world in her proper path, as she swings around him, else she should have long ago dashed away into space, to die with cold or to collide with some other globe. We might dispense with the moon, perhaps, and live; but if the sun's influence were suspended, this world and all the worlds on which he shines would perish.

We spoke of the motion of the moon round the earth. She makes this revolution at a distance from us of about 240,000 miles. Now that is a long way off. If we could go to the moon in a train, and travel at the rate of a thousand miles a day, we would have to spend eight months on the trip, travelling day and night. That shows that the moon is a long way off. But, now suppose the earth were placed in the center of the sun. Suppose the moon were revolving round us, and as far distant from us as she is now. Of course, in that case, the moon would be a long way outside of the sun? No, not at all. There would be plenty of room within the sun for the moon to make her revolution. Nay,

more, the moon's orbit in such a case would be just about half way between his center and his outer rim. There would be room for an outer moon to be placed as far away from the inner one as the inner one is distant from the center of the sun; and even that outer moon would find space within the sun in which to revolve. Such is the astounding magnitude of the sun. He is really a universe in himself. I think we have now risen to some conception of the vastness of this orb of light and fire.

A Christmas Gift for each Home—a Calendar.

Herewith you will find an illustration of a calendar—the calendar itself is 10 inches by 7 inches, four times as large as this, twice as high and twice as wide. You may send us a 100-word directory of your church services and this will be printed on 150 of these calendars on a good stiff card, with a hole for hanging, and shipped to you express paid for \$3.50. 250 for \$4.50. 500 for \$7.00. Cash with order. This is a permanent advertisement for your church services, and at your local printers would cost you twice this. We will ship all orders received before Dec. 1, on Dec. 5. Orders received before Dec. 10 will be shipped Dec. 15, and all orders after Dec. 10 will be shipped in time for New Year. We can furnish large envelopes suitable for mailing these calendars for 40 cents per 100.

F. M. BARTON, Caxton Bldg., Cleveland, O.



1905

JANUARY.							FEBRUARY.							MARCH.						
Sa	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Sa	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Sa	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
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8	9	10	11	12	13	14	8	9	10	11	12	13	8	9	10	11	12	13		
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	15	16	17	18	19	20	15	16	17	18	19	20		
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	22	23	24	25	26	27	22	23	24	25	26	27		
29	30	31					29	30	31				29	30	31					

APRIL.							MAY.							JUNE.						
Sa	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Sa	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Sa	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
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MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR.

Baptist Church,

Sidney Centre, N. Y.

FRANK W. STANTON, PASTOR.

SUNDAY SERVICES:—Forsyth, 10:30 A. M. and 7 P. M., Sunday School, 12 M. Junior C. E., 4 P. M. Senior C. E., 6 P. M.

PRAYER MEETING:—Wednesday, 7 P. M.

COVENANT MEETING:—First Saturday of every month at 2 P. M.

Who shall I say I met
Go down daily run
In other and in street.

Why should they drop
On Sabbath day,
When I take my long
My death is near?

JULY.							AUGUST.							SEPTEMBER.						
Sa	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Sa	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Sa	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
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8	9	10	11	12	13	14	8	9	10	11	12	13	8	9	10	11	12	13		
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	15	16	17	18	19	20	15	16	17	18	19	20		
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	22	23	24	25	26	27	22	23	24	25	26	27		
29	30	31					29	30	31				29	30	31					

OCTOBER.							NOVEMBER.							DECEMBER.						
Sa	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Sa	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa	Sa	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
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29	30	31					29	30	31				29	30	31					

Preacher's Scrap Book.

TYPHOID FEVER AND LIQUOR SALOONS. (155)

Matt. 5:17; Rom. 7:12.

Mr. John G. Woolley seized on the rigid attempt to crush out typhoid fever at Ithaca, New York, the seat of Cornell University, to show the inconsistency of the public which is wise enough to take the proper measures to protect citizens from typhoid fever while it leaves them exposed to the destructive influence of saloons. Mr. Woolley says:

"The Board of Health of Ithaca, New York, in order to check the spread of typhoid fever there, has passed a resolution declaring it a crime to use unboiled city water for domestic purposes. We are just as much opposed to typhoid fever as anybody, but in the interest of consistency and common sense we rise to say: You can't make men healthy by law. The people have always used raw water, and they always will. If Ithaca does not furnish it, other cities will, and she will lose her boom in the medical and undertaking lines, and grass will grow in her cemetery drives. Power of resistance to typhoid cannot be cultivated in the people without permitting them to be exposed to it. It is an infringement of personal liberty to forbid a man to drink dirty water, if he likes it. Ithacans will become sneaks under this Sumptuary legislation. They will crawl down into the creek bottom and drink twice as much as they would if they could just step up to the spigot and take a drink when they wanted it. They will drink from the sewers. They will carry bottles of city water. They will club together and go to great excess. They will swear in court that they didn't know it was water. They will take typhoid fever into politics. The true principle is regulation. There would be a certain value in having the water boiled for children after 11 o'clock at night, on Sundays and election days. Delirious typhoid patients ought to be told, 'No, you have had enough, but Prohibition does not prohibit.'"

A MOTHER'S INFLUENCE. (156)

1 Sam. 1:27; Prov. 31:28; 1 Tim. 1:15.

A Christian gentleman, who was travelling, took a seat in a railway train next to a man, and in his conversation learned that he had just become a Christian.

He said that it was through a letter written him by his mother. My friend asked to see the letter which would mean the conversion of a man, and he answered, "It is not so much in what she says, but it is the way she signs her name; you can see that her hand has trembled, and when I read it I said, 'If she dies no one else will ever ask me to be a Christian again.'"

THE FICKLE MULTITUDE. (157)

Matt. 21:9; Mark 15:13, 14.

The Rev. Frank DeWitt Talmage has this paragraph in a Palm Sunday sermon:

The Duke of Wellington well understood the fickleness of popular applause. Long after the conqueror of Napoleon had regained his popularity, and had become the most beloved sub-

ject of the Victorian Empire, he always kept the fence around his city home broken down, as an object lesson, to recall the time when the London mob battered it down, to show their disgust at one of his official acts as Prime Minister. William E. Gladstone was again and again execrated in the streets of the British capital, through which his dead body was afterward carried to sleep its last sleep among the honored dead of Westminster, the Prince of Wales, now King, being among the pall-bearers. Joan of Arc, who led the French armies to victory, was deserted by her followers, who came to believe her a witch and a devil. The same tongue which once charmed the Roman assemblies, was afterward cut out of the mouth of Cicero by the mobs, and nailed up in the Roman Forum, with the epitaph, "Thou fool, wag no more!" Ah, we do not have to stand among the vociferating multitudes of Palm Sunday to hear and see the fickleness of the human race. We can see everywhere the human idols being shattered. The same voices that are ready to cry to us "Put him upon a throne," are the voices which tomorrow will call, "Lead him away to execution."

A young woman visiting in the country for the first time wanted to show her familiarity with country customs. At the supper a nice comb of honey was brought to the table. "Oh," she exclaimed, "you keep a bee, don't you!"

The chicken appetite of the proverbial preacher is put to shame by the feat of a weasel. The animal entered an incubator brooder at Delaware, O., and devoured seventy-two young chickens.

When he started to leave the brooder, Mr. Weasel could not squeeze through the opening by which he entered and was found in the brooder and killed in the morning.

Delaware is the place where young Methodist preachers are educated.

TEDDY'S QUERY.

One brother was tall and slim,

The other chubby and short.

Teddy sat looking at them one night,

Apparently lost in thought.

"Mamma," he asked at length,

"Which would you like the best—

For me to grow north and south, like Tom,

Or like Willie, from east to west?"

—Adelbert F. Caldwell.

SAMPLE COPY.

As a large number of sample copies of this number have been sent out, you may not be a regular subscriber to Current Anecdotes, which many say is more than it claims or indicates.

This issue contains 70 illustrations and ten or twelve sermons. These printed in book form would cost you fifty cents.

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CURRENT ANECDOTES (Sub. Dept.), Cleveland, O.

Windows for Sermons.

By H. J. ZIMMERMAN.

DOES IT PAY? (158)

Prov. 23:5; Matt. 16:26; Luke 14:28.

There is one form of Arctic exploration little known to the general public. The history of famous Polar expeditions, the trials of the gallant explorers, and the large sums expended in fitting out and maintaining vessels is news familiar to all, but the hunt for the Polar flea is not so well known.

More than a year ago the Honorable Charles Rothschild, commissioned the Arctic sailing whaler, *Forget-Me-Not*, to hunt for the Polar flea. The hunt was apparently futile, for Mr. Rothschild now offers a reward, according to the *Daily Express*, of £1,000 for the Arctic fox flea, to add to the collection of those insects in the famous zoological museum in Tring Park, where already there are thousands of fleas which have been obtained from birds and beasts in all parts of the world. It seems that the flea of the Arctic fox is to flea fanciers what the egg of the great auk is to collectors of birds' eggs, for only two perfect specimens are known to exist in the collections.

In addition to the reward referred to, Mr. Rothschild has again fitted out the *Forget-Me-Not*, which is already at work looking for the flea.

This account provokes a smile when we think of the magnitude of the effort to capture a flea. From a scientific standpoint the undertaking may be justifiable. But the average man will naturally ask—Does it pay? It is a fair question for every man to ask himself as he starts out on the voyage of life in the pursuit of worldly pleasure. Will the end justify the means? Worldly happiness, when sought in the usual way, is about as scarce and elusive an article as the "Polar flea." Like the Irishman's flea—"when you have it—it isn't there."

A MONUMENT TO CHEERFULNESS.

Prov. 15:13, 15; Prov. 17:22; Acts 27:36; Rom. 12:8; Jas. 5:13. (159)

The following quaint epitaph is to be seen in Crayford churchyard, Kent. It strikes us as one of the very prettiest monuments to cheerfulness in all Merrie England: "Here lieth the body of Peter Inel (thirty years clerk of this parish). He lived respected as a pious and a mirthful man, and died on his way to church to assist at a wedding on the 31st day of March, 1811, aged seventy years. The inhabitants of Crayford have raised this stone to his cheerful memory and as a tribute to his long and faithful service."

The life of such a man suggests to us a Sunday School hymn which we often sang in childhood:

Let our hearts be always cheerful;
Why should murr'ring enter there,
When our kind and loving Father
Makes us children of his care?

Always cheerful, always cheerful!
Sunshine all around we see;
Full of beauty is the path of duty,
Cheerful we may always be.

GOD'S KNOWLEDGE OF US. (160)

Gen. 16:13; 2 Chron. 16:9; Ps. 139:2, 8; Prov. 15:3; Zech. 4:10.

In his "Chapters from My Diplomatic Life" in the *Century*, Andrew D. White writes:

Least pleasing of all duties was looking after fugitives from justice or birds of prey evidently seeking new victims. On this latter point, I recall an experience which may throw some light on the German mode of watching doubtful persons. A young American had appeared in various public places wearing a naval uniform to which he was not entitled, declaring himself a son of the President of the United States, and apparently making ready for a career of scoundrelism. Consulting the Minister of Foreign Affairs one day, I mentioned this case, asking him to give me such information as came to him. He answered: "Remind me at your next visit, and perhaps I can show you something."

On my calling, some days later, the minister handed me a paper on which was inscribed, apparently, not only every place the young man had visited during the past week, but everything he had done and said, his conversations in the restaurants being noted with especial care, and while the man was evidently worthless, he was clearly rather a fool than a scoundrel. On my expressing surprise at the fulness of this information, the minister seemed quite as much surprised at my supposing it possible for any good government to exist without such complete surveillance of suspected persons.

God has an intimate knowledge of us. He watches over us with an eye that never slumbers. Every step, every thought, every deed, all are known to him as an open book.

LEAKS IN CHARACTER. (161)

2 Kings 10:31; Ps. 119:9; 1 Tim 4:2; Heb. 2:1.

William F. Cogan, of Hoboken, N. J., has filed an application for a patent on what he believes will be one of the most important inventions in many years for shipping. Mr. Cogan, who is a member of the Hudson Towing Company, says his device will almost immediately detect a leak in any craft afloat.

The invention consists of a copper tube perforated at the lower end so that the water may penetrate. Inside is a float which is forced upward as the water mounts in the tube. When the water is three inches deep the float closes a circuit and as the tube is connected with a battery, an alarm is sounded in the captain's cabin or elsewhere in the ship.

Many a character has sprung a leak through falsehood, dishonesty, worldliness, etc., and gone down to an untimely grave because the alarm conscience gave was ignored.

THOUGH POOR, YET RICH. (162)

Rom. 8:17; 1 Cor. 3:21-23; 2 Cor. 9:15; Gal. 4:7.

Mrs. Henry Klasson, formerly Elizabeth Neumann, heiress to half a million dollars left

by Millionaire Thomas Neumann, of Wheeling, W. Va., and who has been searched for by Wheeling attorneys, was located at Calhoun, Neb., last week. Her family is poor, living on a mortgaged farm in a small weather-worn cottage, in need of repairs of all kinds. When called for she appeared in blue gingham apron, bare arms and bare feet.

This suggests the hymn:

My Father is rich in houses and lands,
He holdeth the wealth of the world in his hands,
Of rubies and diamonds, of silver and gold,
His coffers are full, he has riches untold.

A tent or a cottage—why should I care?
They're building a palace for me over there.
Though exiled from home, yet still I may sing,
All glory to God, I'm a child of the King.

OUR IMPERFECT ATTAINMENTS. (163)

Ps. 17:15; Ps. 139:6; Phil. 3:12-16;
2 Pet. 3:18.

The discouraged artist stood off from his latest work and viewed it with a gloomy face. "There's no use talking about it," he said morosely, "I can't paint as well as I did ten years ago."

"Oh, yes, you can," said the tried and honest friend, to whom he made the confession. "It's only that your taste is improving."

In many cases a soul hypersensitive to its imperfect attainments has really grown more and is nearer its ideal than one who is disposed to boast of what he has accomplished.

GOOD HABITS DEMANDED BY BUSINESS FIRMS. (164)

Gen. 41:42-46; 1 Kings 18:3; Ps. 119:9;
Prov. 22:1; Dan. 1:19; Dan. 2:48.

Absolute prohibition of gambling in any form, particularly betting on the races, and also of drinking, cigarette smoking and dissipation, has been announced by the management of the Western Electric Company to its employees.

They are the largest employers of young men in Chicago, more than 1,500 being on the rolls. This notice was posted in the offices, factories and shipping departments:

"Playing the races and all other forms of gambling, immoral conduct and the excessive use of liquor or cigarettes greatly impair one's usefulness. The best business houses in this city do not desire the services of those who practice any of these things. Notice is hereby given that any employee so abusing himself is subject to dismissal."

There are 300 college graduates, representative of all the great schools East and West. These men Superintendent Mitchell says, are all that can be desired. "We discovered," said he, "that the habit of playing the races was developed to an alarming extent in the ranks of our employees, and decided to give every one fair warning of our attitude in the matter.

"As for cigarette smoking, we are convinced that, in excess, it clouds a man's intellectual powers."

The Illinois Central Railway, the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy, Marshall Field & Co. and the Farwell Company have within ten days posted notices of a similar character. The ultimatum in all cases is:

"Young man, be good; however lonesome, you will be happy."

LIQUOR THIRST IN MILK. (165)

The theory that germs of an appetite for liquor are imparted to Chicago babies through the medium of milk from cows that eat the refuse from Peoria distilleries has suggested itself to Assistant State Food Inspector R. M. Patterson.

Mr. Patterson has just returned from Peoria, where he found 150 distillery-fed cows whose milk had been regularly shipped to Chicago. He enjoined the dairy to sell no more milk from these cattle.

"I cannot say that I saw any of the cattle under the influence of liquor," said Mr. Patterson, "but I know that the corn mash has a peculiar effect on them, and it is against the law to sell their milk."

GOING ON TO PERFECTION. (166)

Mark 4:28; Jno. 15:1; 2 Cor. 13:9; Heb. 6:1.

Perhaps no flower that is today the pet of both florists and general admirers has undergone a more perfect yet gradual transformation than the dahlia. Here is to be seen the original flower—a straggling, uncouth, school-boy-looking plant in the primary grade, as it were. Then in even progression, like the marks of a graduated glass, are seen the results of the evolutionary steps of the gardener's skill and nature's handiwork, until at the finish comes the beautiful, full developed, double dahlia that represents the florist's highest success. The analogy between plant growth and the growth in Christian graces in man is a striking one. Both beginnings are humble and, in many cases, unpromising. And it requires the skill, patience, knowledge and tender care of a gardener in both cases to bring about perfection. The divine husbandman knows that the soul will attain its highest development only after he transplants it into the soil and atmosphere of heaven.

DRESS PARADE SOLDIERS. (167)

2 Tim. 2:3.

Several years ago the autumn parade of the garrison of Berlin and Potsdam, usually a splendid military spectacle, did not take place. Emperor William, owing to the fact that it began to rain, ordered the 30,000 troops who were already in the field to return to their barracks. A thorough wetting would have cost each of the officers \$5 to \$20 in damage done to the gold trimmings of their uniforms.

There are too many dress parade soldiers in the army of the Lord, who take to the barracks at once at the slightest danger of spoiling the braid on their uniforms. Such care more for their comfort and appearance than the cause for which they are to contend. Better spoil a few uniforms than surrender a principle or lose God's cause.

The Cure for Discontent.

BY FREDERICK BARTON.

Suggestive illustrations for a sermon on discontent—or can be used in contrast for a sermon on Christmas or Thanksgiving.

GIVE US OUR DAILY BREAD. (168)

Prov. 30:8; Matt. 6:11.

Accounts of dinners given by millionaires costing from \$10 to \$100 a plate, the latter amount being the total cash income of some small families for a year—are breeders of discontent and envy, and in some cases anarchy. But an analysis of the canvas-back duck for which epicures pay from \$3 to \$10, when served in some fashionable hotel, shows that it contains exactly the same elements, but in less valuable proportions, as are found in common white corn. There is no food placed on the table of the rich which differs in any way from the plain food of the poor, except in its excess of carbons or fats; and these rich foods are the direct cause of headaches, gout, neuralgia, inflammation of the joints, and sores, pimples, abscesses, tumors, and bad livers.

Therefore the evening meal of Riley's "Cheerful Little Cripple," described in lines below is as nutritious as the rich man's feast.

At evening, when the ironin's done, an'
Aunt's fixed the fire,
An' filled an' lit the lamp, an' trimmed the
wick an' turned it higher,
An' fetched the wood all in fer night, an'
locked the kitchen door,
An' stuffed the ole crack where the wind blows
in up through the floor—
She sets the kittle on the coals, an' biles an'
makes the tea,
An' fries the liver an' the mush, an' cooks an
egg for me;
An' sometimes—when I cough so hard—her
elderberry wine
Don't go so bad fer little boys with "Curv'ture
of the Spine."

RICHES A BURDEN. (169)

Ecll. 5:13; Prov. 28:20.

No greater piece of descriptive writing has come to my attention than Thos. W. Lawson's account of his interview with H. H. Rogers, the brains of the Standard Oil Co., and a man credited with the ability to produce more money in a day than Mr. Rockefeller himself. It appears in Everybody's Magazine for November, page 67. Mr. Rogers had proposed that Lawson join his youth and energy to the capital of the trust. Lawson replied:

"If I accepted your proposal, I could no longer be true to myself, even if Addicks and Boston Gas were out of it. The man who is 'Standard Oil' wears a collar, and if I did what you ask I should expect to wear a collar and—and—I can't do it." I stopped; I was not excited; I could not be with that calm figure, apparently cut from crystal ice, so near me, but I was very much in earnest. I stopped; I didn't know what he would do—He raised his hand and held it out to me, mine grasped it, and without a word thus we stood long enough to put that seal on our friendship which none of the many financial hells we jointly passed through in the after nine years was hot enough to melt.

But that is ended. Henry H. Rogers's evidence in the Boston "Gas Trial" was the spark that kindled the dead leaves of the past into the conflagration which, now spreading beyond the control of man, has brought to light the hidden skeletons of past misdeeds and exposed them for all the world to see.

He at last broke the spell. "Lawson, you're a queer chap, but we all are queer, for that matter, and we must work along those lines we each think best. I once stood, just as you do now, in front of a man whom I looked up to as all that was wisest and best. He made an earnest effort to induce me to choose the ministry for my life work, but I chose dollars instead, and I sometimes wonder if I chose wisely, but, as I said, we all must select our pack and, as we are the ones who must carry it, I suppose no one else should complain." There was a tinge of disappointment in his words.

Here was a man who said that he had chosen "dollars" instead of the "ministry," and then spake of choice in life as a peddler's "pack!"

GIVING AND "SWAPPING." (170)

Luke 6:34; 2 Cor. 9:6.

Considerable discontent is caused by not having more money to spend at Christmas, and the thought of "what will so-and-so think if I don't send a Christmas present. They sent me such a nice present last year." This isn't giving but "swapping."

That it causes more than discontent is shown by Sheriff Barry, of Cleveland, who is entitled to speak, as he is one of the three men who give several thousand chickens and loaves of bread to the poor each Christmas. He says:

"I believe that in some respects Christmas giving does more harm than good. The thing is all right in principle, but the way in which it works out causes a great deal of bitterness and hardship. A poor man wants to give his wife and children presents and has not the money to buy them with. The presents are expected, and the poor father's inability to buy them almost breaks his heart. The mother feels it keenly, too, but the father probably is most disheartened, because the responsibility is his. This very feeling seems to have driven two men to suicide last Christmas, and in the case of one of them, Roscoe Derby, the death of a whole family can partly be explained by the misery that comes over a poor man on the approach of Christmas, when he feels that he ought to be happy and prosperous. Such cases have often occurred.

"Giving to children is all right, and of course causes much happiness when it can be afforded. The sacrifice, too, is probably a good thing, provided it is not carried too far. But people do carry it too far.

"Among adults, however, there is no doubt that the custom of giving large numbers of Christmas presents causes much hardship. There is no sense in giving so many presents to friends and relatives. As a token of disinterested friendship, a modest gift, voluntarily given, is a good thing."

Illustrations from History.

S. A. MORSE, D. D.

THE GRACE OF HUMILITY. (171)

Ps. 25:9; 37:11; Prov. 16:19; Luke 18:13, 14.

In 1812, the General Conference passed a resolution requesting Bishop Asbury to sit for his likeness, to be drawn by a portrait painter of Philadelphia. But the Bishop fled from the city, and the Secretary of the Conference found it necessary to send a letter of apology to the artist. In Baltimore better success attended the efforts of the friends to get a picture of the Bishop. James McCannon was a merchant tailor, who was entertaining the Bishop, the Baltimore Conference being then in session. McCannon said to him, "Brother Asbury, here is a piece of black velvet which I was thinking I would make up for the preachers, for some of them seem to be in great need." "Ah, James," said the Bishop, "that would be a good thing, if you can afford it." "Oh, yes, I can afford it, but I expect to be paid a good price for it," said the tailor. "Price!" exclaimed the Bishop, "if it is price you are after, it is not worth while to talk any more about it," and was about to pass on. "Come, come, Brother Asbury," said the tailor, "you can pay the price and be none the poorer for it." "Why, how is that," asked the Bishop. "Just this," answered his friend; "if you will sit to a painter for your portrait I will give this piece of velvet to the preachers and have it made up for them besides." "Ah, James," said the Bishop, "I believe you've got me now!" and passed on to the parlor. The first sketch was taken the same afternoon, and thus was obtained the long coveted portrait of Bishop Asbury.

THE ROMAN TRIUMPHATOR. (172)

The moral sense of the earlier Romans was keen enough to perceive that to the man whom they delighted to honor with a "triumph," there lurked a danger to his character in the excessive adulation accorded him. To neutralize, if possible, this danger, in the midst of the pompous parade of the "triumph," a slave, placed behind the great man, and holding a crown of Etruscan gold in his hand, had the duty of whispering often in his ears, "Remember that thou art but a man."

(173)

HUMILITY NOT A PAGAN VIRTUE.

The prosperous—as the world counts success—needs such an admonition even now, but not as the pagan. Cannon Liddon (*Bampton Lectures*, 1866, p. 491), sets forth the fact that pride was a principle of the pagan heart, in words well worth quoting. He says: "If the civilized pagan was impure he was also proud and self-asserting. He might, perhaps, deem overt acts of pride and imprudence, on the ground that they were likely to provoke Nemesis, or some spiteful deity. The fates were against continued prosperity; and it was unwise to boast of that which they waited to destroy. * * * But when this prudential consideration did not weigh with him, the pagan gave full scope to the assertion of self in thought, word and act. The sentiment of

pride was not in conflict with his higher conscience, as would be the case with the Christian. He indulged it without scruple, nay, rather, upon principle,

'Secundas fortunas decent superbias.'

He was utterly unable to see the intrinsic evil in it; and it penetrated in a subtle but intense form into the heart of those better ethical systems, which, like the later Stoicism, appeared most nearly to rival the moral glories of the Gospel."

THE SHAME OF CHRISTIANITY AND CIVILIZATION. (174)

Prov. 15:8; Is. 1:13; 29:13; Luke 6:46; Phil. 3:2, 18; Tit. 1:16.

NARVAEZ AND DeSOTO.

Touch Spanish history or character almost anywhere, since the establishment of the Inquisition, and you will touch the foulest blots to be seen from first to last on the escutcheon of a professed Christianity. "The cruelties," says B. J. Lossing, "of Narvaez and DeSoto in Florida aroused among the native tribes feelings of the bitterest hatred. Narvaez caused a captive cacique, or chief, to be mutilated, after the first battle with the hostile Indians. His nose was cut off and he was otherwise disfigured, and the invader caused fierce bloodhounds to tear the chief's mother in pieces in the presence of her children. Narvaez supposed that this would strike terror and make conquest easy, but he was mistaken. DeSoto had bloodhounds, iron neck-collars, hand-cuffs, chains and instruments of torture wherewith to subdue the barbarians, who were really less barbarous than he. He loaded his captives with chains, and made beasts of burden of them regardless of age or sex. After some acts of this sort he sought to conciliate Acuera, a Creek cacique, or ruler, whose territory he had invaded, for he was powerful and commanded many warriors. DeSoto invited the dusky sovereign to a friendly interview, when he received from Acuera this haughty reply: 'Others of your accursed race (Narvaez and his men) have in years past disturbed our peaceful shores. They have taught me what you are. What is your employment? To wander about like vagabonds from land to land; to rob the poor and weak; to betray the confiding; to murder the defenceless in cold blood. No! With such people I want neither peace nor friendship. War—never-ending, exterminating war—is all I ask.' DeSoto could never pacify Acuera, and during the twenty days that he remained in the cacique's dominions his command suffered dreadfully. A Spaniard could not go an hundred paces from his camp without being slain, and his severed head being carried in triumph to Acuera. Fourteen Castilians so perished, and many were severely wounded. 'Keep on, robbers and traitors,' said the cacique; 'in my province and in Apalacha you will be treated as you deserve. We will quarter and hang every captive on the highest tree.' And they did so."

THE DEMAND FOR RETRIBUTION. (175)

Ps. 28:4; 37:14, 15; 94:1, 4.

THE SLAUGHTER OF THE WALDENSES.

Dr. Austin Phelps discusses this topic and appeals to the universal instinct of justice to defend the Scriptural teaching concerning future retribution. He instances the case of the terrible successive persecutions of the Alpine Protestants. "Exigencies occur," he says, "in which, with the whole concentrated force of our being, we exult in retributive inflictions. Read Milton's sonnet on the slaughter in Piedmont:

'Avenge, O Lord, thy slaughtered saints, whose bones
Lie scattered on the Alpine mountains cold!'

"What is the meaning of the passionate appeals to Heaven, of which all free literatures are full, for the justice of an avenging Power to fall on tyrants? Are they all delusions? Are they inhuman or malign? If they are, the best poetry in history is a cheat. We must expurgate our libraries, and commit their noblest treasures to the flames. What means that human instinct of all nations and ages, which voiced itself in Hebrew jurisprudence, 'Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed'?"

"For murder-stroke shall murder-stroke be paid."—My Study, p. 88.

PROOF AGAINST BRIBERY. (176)

Deut. 16:19; 2 Chron. 19:7; Is. 33:15, 16.

Our country, and particularly the Empire State, should remember with gratitude George Jones and Louis J. Jennings, proprietor and editor, respectively, of the *New York Times*. It was in the days of "Sweed and Tweeny," as Thomas Nast used to like to call those arch-looters of Gotham, Wm. M. Tweed and Peter B. Sweeney. The effort to purchase the silence of *The Times* is related once more by a writer in a late issue of a monthly—*Pearson's*. Two confederates of the looting gang turned "state's evidence," and immediately there was terror in the bandit camp. This is the story:

"A tenant in the same building (The Times building) sent for Mr. Jones to come to his office, as he wished to see him on an important matter. Mr. Jones went to the lawyer's office, and, being ushered into a private room, was confronted by Controller Connolly.

"I don't want to see this man," said Mr. Jones and he turned to go.

"For God's sake!" exclaimed Connolly, 'let me say one word to you.'

"At this appeal Mr. Jones stopped. Connolly then made him a proposition to forego the publication of the documents he had in his possession and offered him the enormous sum of five million dollars to do this. As Connolly waited for the answer, Mr. Jones said:

"I don't think the devil will ever make a higher bid for me than that."

"Connolly began to plead, and drew a graphic picture of what one could do with five million dollars. He ended by saying:

"Why, with that sum you can go to Europe and live like a prince."

"Yes," said Mr. Jones, 'but I should know

that I was a rascal. I cannot consider your offer, or any offer, not to publish the facts in my possession.'"

ALEXANDER HAMILTON. (177)

A recent biographer relates that the youth, Alexander Hamilton, having thrown in his lot with the colonial revolutionists, and having come into public view by reason of platform addresses and printed pamphlets, had greatly offended the staunch old Tory president of King's College, where Hamilton was a student. Nevertheless, the old doctor recognized the power of the young man, and sought to secure him for the "loyal" side. He sent for Alexander, and made his proposition. "Ask your own price, sir," he said. "You will find us more liberal,"—but Hamilton had bolted. "It is impossible to knock down one's venerable president," and his temper was still an active member in the family of his faculties.—Gerrit Atherton, *The Conqueror*, p. 139.

NEMESIS. (178)

Luke 9:9; Rom. 13:4.

To the terrified soul of Herod, the Prophet of Galilee seemed Nemesis in the form of the ghost of the great Herald whom he had murdered. One cannot but think of this as he reads in Guizot the account of the assassination of Henry, Duke of Guise. It was by the direct instigation of the king, Henry III. Guizot relates that the king contemplated with mingled satisfaction and terror the inanimate body of his mighty rival, who seemed to be merely sleeping, so little was he changed. "My God, how tall he is!" cried the king. "He looks even taller than when he was alive." Was it not the dim apparition of Nemesis which the guilty king saw then in the prostrate form of his foe? The avenger always looks terrible, very mighty, to the eyes of guilt.

BOOKS FOR PREACHERS—OF PERMANENT VALUE.

A Chat with the Publisher.

Why are the books I announce on colored page 129 of especial value to preachers? In the first place I publish exclusively for preachers, and do not seek other trade. Next, I consult leading preachers and other well-read men as to the value of a work before I undertake it; men of different denominations, conservative as well as advanced thinkers.

Annotations Upon Popular Hymns was written by the best judge of hymns America has known; editor of a half-dozen leading hymnals. He wrote with the praise or song service in mind. Every time we used a song service we had requests for a book along the same line. The book is worth \$3.00, and will be of more practical use to you than any other work on hymnology published. Sent postpaid, \$2.00.

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Pulpit Power and Eloquence of the One Hundred Best Sermons of the 19th Century (2d edition) has taken its place as the best collection of sermons published. Volume 2 of *Pulpit Power and Eloquence* contains 30 or more sermons. These books are the cream of sermon production, and each contain sermons abreast of the times. Read one sermon a week and your respect and admiration of your calling will increase, and it will strike your mental flint till a shower of sparks start. Sent postpaid for \$3.00.

F. M. BARTON, Publisher, Cleveland, O.

Christmas Thoughts from Great Minds.

Selected by S. A. WILSON.

IMMANUEL.

(179)

Matt. 1: 23.

What is it makes him dear to us today? What is it makes us never tired of hearing that old story of waiting shepherds and kneeling wise men, of the rough manger? It is this perfect merging of his lot in ours. What is it that in spite of all the changes still bids Hope look to him, and Faith cling to him as firmly in these days as did the newer, simpler Hope and Faith of the first times? Not chiefly his wonder-working power; dearer than his miracles is his cradle; for this is its lesson—that human life, though it begin in a manger and end on a cross, is full of God. For God is with us, not to save us from our human condition, but to fill that condition with a hope and promise it never knew before.—W. S. Rainsford.

THE ANGELS AND THE SHEPHERDS.

Luke 2: 11.

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Nothing more ethereal, nothing purer, nothing more beautiful can be conceived of than this whole angelic appearance and annunciation. Yet it was made to rude shepherds. It was made to the few and not to the many. It seems as though it was an overflow of heavenly joy meant for their own enjoying, rather than as a composite message sent by the hands of many angels to the earth. The shepherd heard what was going on above. It was going on there for higher spectators, and for souls rejoicing among the blessed; but, as it were, it broke forth, and some of the strains fell on the earth, not like an anthem or chorus; but as here and there music is heard on a summer night, afar off, snatches being wafted to us, and then being hushed again by intervening noises or winds, so there seem to have been snatches of this celestial music—the annunciation. These snatches did not constitute the whole song of heavenly joy, but were a part of it.

The shepherds passed away. Nothing more is known of them. Their ministry was to be spectators and annunciators; and having fulfilled their mission they sank out of view.—H. W. Beecher.

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A LITTLE CHILD SHALL LEAD THEM.

Luke 18: 17; Isa. 11: 6; Matt. 18: 5.

And all over the world, this Christmas morning, there are men and women grown hard in the world's ways, who look down upon child faces while their hearts expand and grow generous, and they are drawn nearer to God by the innocence of their little ones. Oh, beautiful child-faces, which work such miracles upon stony hearts! There are thousands of "Tiny Tims," and the Scrooges who have neglected any call of pity, until suddenly some child-face looks up into theirs and wins them back to the ways of God, are without number.

Even the Dombeyes, so much more difficult than the Scrooges, are brought by child-faces into the presence of heaven after everyone supposed their hearts to have been long since petrified. And they look up at the last moment, and "thanking God for that older fashion yet of immortality," beg with the Master, "Look upon us, angels of young children, with regards not quite estranged when the swift river bears us to the ocean."—Carl Christopher, in the *Cosmopolitan*.

THE BELOVED.

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1 Pet. 1: 8.

The great peculiarity of Jesus is the intensity of the personal affection he has been able to inspire. The apostles give him one title which was his above all the other children of men, The Beloved. Christ has been and now is beloved as no other human being ever was. Tell a Hottentot or a Zulu the story of Socrates, and it excites no very deep emotion; but for eighteen hundred years Hottentots, Zulus, South Sea Islanders and Greenlanders, men and women and children, in every land, have conceived such an ardent, passionate, personal love to Jesus of Nazareth that they have been ready to face torture and death for his sake. So felt the Christians of the first ages, and time does not cool the ardor. Jesus has been the one man of whom it has been possible to say to people of all times, ages and languages, "Whom not having seen ye love."—H. B. Stowe.

CHRISTIANITY AND CHILDREN. (183)

Zech. 8: 5.

We were riding on between fertile fields of wheat and orchards of olive and mulberry trees, when suddenly we heard the sounds of high pitched children's voices. In an olive orchard by the road was a rollicking, shouting crowd of Syrian children, having as jolly a time as you could wish to see. Swings were going, games were in progress, and it was such a scene of child-life as we had witnessed nowhere else in Syria. The children's sunshiny faces were the best of all, for they were genuinely happy, as God meant children to be, and not as most of the little sober-faced people in the Holy Land. For these were Christian children of the village of El Raney, and that explained all; you remember that when Jehovah is returned unto Zion, then "the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing." We persuaded them to get together in an effective group by the roadside, and there we caught them with our cameras. Just then a white turbaned candy man move in sight, and we gave him a franc to "set up" the entire crowd. * * * "Have you noticed," said the Doctor to me, "that not one of the children has asked for bakhsheesh! Let's get away before they do, so as to have one case on record." But we did not hurry and they did not ask. Christianity makes a difference.—C. G. Trumbull, in the *Sunday School Times*.

"HE BEING DEAD, YET SPEAKETH."

Heb. 11:4. (184)

One of the most eloquent passages of Senator Hoar's speeches was that in which he used as an illustration Trumbull's famous painting of the "Declaration of Independence," in the Rotunda of the Capitol. Speaking of the great principles declared in that Declaration he said:

"When Samuel Rogers visited the Dominican Convent at Padua, an aged friar showed him in the refectory the famous picture of the 'Last Supper,' and then remarked: 'I have sat at my meals before it for seven and forty years, and such are the changes that have taken place among us,—so many have come and gone in that time,—that when I look upon the company there, who are sitting at the table, silent as they are, I am sometimes inclined to think that we, not they, are the shadows.'

"As administrations, terms of presidential office begin and end," continued Mr. Hoar; "as senators and representatives come and go before the silent figures in that immortal picture in the Rotunda, it seems to me that we are but the shadows, while Hancock and Jefferson and Adams and Franklin and Ellsworth and Livingston are still deliberating, still acting, still alive."

The great and good who have founded nations in righteousness are the eternally living forces that move the world.—*Youth's Companion*.

CHRIST IN ART AND SONG. (185)

Rev. 1:18; Rev. 5:12; Matt. 28:18, 20.

Dr. Amory J. Bradford says:

It has often seemed to me that the most wonderful thing about Jesus Christ is the fact that to everyone he seems to be living today. Other men aroused enthusiasm; Jesus still fires thousands with a willingness to die for him. Other men live in history; Jesus lives in the hearts of consecrated followers. The story of Christianity is the story of enthusiasm for Christ. Paul represented himself as taken hold of by the love of Christ. The earthly martyrs competed for the honor of being burned to death in his name. The motto of the beautiful St. Francis, who was the friend of both man and beast, was "the love of Christ." The art of the world for centuries has found its sublimest subjects in the Gospel story. It is a revelation to go through the world's great galleries of art. Listen! The most beautiful picture in the National Gallery in London is Murillo's "Holy Family"; in Paris, Murillo's "Assumption of the Virgin"; in Antwerp, Ruben's "Descent from the Cross"; in Florence, "The Madonna de la Sedia"; in Venice, Titian's "Assumption of the Virgin"; in Milan, Leonardo's "Last Supper"; in Berlin, Guido's "Ecce Homo"; in Rome, "The Crucifixion," and in Madrid, "The Ascension," by Raphael; in Dresden, the crown of all the world's art, "The Sistine Madonna."

THE PLACE OF JESUS IN POETRY

is not less significant. It is illustrated in Dante's "Vision," Tennyson's "Holy Grail,"

Browning's "Christmas Eve," "Easter Day," and "Death in the Desert," Whittier's "Our Master," Lanier's "Christ." These are only two or three flowers hurriedly picked in the world's great garden of song.

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Christ in Modern Literature.

The God whom men know outside of Jesus Christ is a poor, nebulous thing; an idea, not a reality; he, or rather it, is a film of cloud shaped into a vague form, through which you can see the stars.—Alexander Mac-laren.

The result of all criticism, the final verdict of all common sense, is that Christ is historical. He is such a person as men could not have imagined if they would, and would not have imagined if they could. He is neither Greek myth, nor Hebrew legend. A non-existent Christianity did not spring out of the air and create a Christ.—Van Dyke: The Gospel for an Age of Doubt.

The assertion that Christ cannot be very God of very God in a sense infinitely beyond what may be truthfully said of all other human beings, is sheer intellectual presumption, is indeed dogmatism of the worst kind.—Gordon: Christ of Today.

To make us the sons of God, possessors of all that is strong and beautiful in the visible creation, heirs of all that is bright and glorious in the hopes of Immortality and Heaven, God sent his Son.—Farrar: The Witness of History to Christ.

The humanity of Jesus was not the veiling but the unveiling of the divine glory. The limitations, temptations, and sufferings of manhood were the conditions under which alone Christ accomplished the greatest work of the Deity,—the redemption of a sinful race. The seat of the divine revelation and the center of the divine atonement was and is the human life of God.—The Gospel for an Age of Doubt.

Beyond the teaching of Jesus thought cannot go. A God better than the Father of Christ is for man inconceivable. A diviner interpretation of human existence than that of Christ is unimaginable. Anything better than the Gospel is simply inconceivable. A higher or greater spirit than Jesus Christ is unthinkable. Christ is the highest word and the best act of God to man. Christ is the best conceivably that man can be; the best that God can do in man. He is, therefore, at once the highest revelation of God, and the sovereign example for man.—Gordon: Ultimate Conceptions of Faith. From "Side Lights" in Service.

Ralph Connor (Charles W. Gordon), author of *Black Rock*, *The Sky Pilot*, etc., says of Current Anecdotes: "The publication is really a good one, and I think has a place for every minister." Are you interested in knowing what over 400 preachers think of Current Anecdotes?

Matthew's Gospel from Life in Matthew's Land.

GHOSN EL HOWIE, Shweir, Mt. Lebanon, Syria.

"AND ALL JERUSALEM WITH HIM."

Matt. 2:3.

Herod came from the Idumean race which was ever opposed to the Jews and ever hated by them (comp. Num. 20:20; Ps. 137:7). His occupation of the Jewish throne was illegal (Deut. 17:15) and the mere sight of him was detestable to Israelites.

The news of a newly born king of the Jews dismayed and agitated him naturally enough, but why Jerusalem, which hated him, should be troubled with him, is a question which only Oriental life could answer; indeed the Bible itself suggests a reason as to why Jerusalem, instead of rejoicing, should be "troubled."

Moses and Aaron approached Pharaoh with a view to obtain freedom for the children of Israel; but the first and immediate result was more burdens and a heavier yoke were put upon the Israelites, and they regarded Moses and Aaron as putting a sword in the hands of the Egyptians to slay the Hebrews. (Ex. 5:6, 21.)

A few years ago, a builder, townsman of mine, built a house for a man of another town. The building collapsed and right away all of us, as well as our townsman, the bad workman, were troubled because we knew that the injured stranger would take vengeance upon the first of us whom he could get hold of; for the injured person, being a native of another town, regards any townsman of his opponent as a fit object for vengeance.

A Damascus merchant comes to the public square, seizes upon the camels of a man from a distant town and leads them away and apparently, as a matter of course, says to the owner of the camels: "Your townsman, Ishmael, owes me 500 piasters; you go now, bring me my money or my debtor and then I will restore your camels to you."

Such proceedings frequently take place in various parts of the country; it is dangerous for us to go to a town in which a townsman of ours is in bad odor.

A few Armenians, in 1895, chose to interfere with the Turkish authorities, and right away the Turks turned upon all Armenians, and the result was that scores of Armenian villages were reduced to ashes, and men, women and children were ruthlessly massacred to the number of 200,000, more or less, and this very day, any Armenian may be suspected and detained anywhere in the Turkish empire, though he be a naturalized American citizen. In such circumstances it was natural for Jewish Jerusalem to be troubled, in case the news of a Jewish rival to Herod should stir up the wrath of the Idumean and his Roman suzerains to destroy Jerusalem and massacre the Jews.

Incensed by the action of a few Bulgarians in 1876, the bashi-bazooks drenched Bulgaria with blood to an extent which horrified Europe and precipitated the Turko-Russian war in 1878.

The Jews might well have feared that any ineffectual rising against Herod might lead to the destruction of Israel. No wonder, then, that all Jerusalem was troubled with him.

"BETHLEHEM OF JUDEA." (188)

Matt. 2:5.

A lecture of mine, descriptive of Bethlehem, delivered in an American town, in 1886, surprised a lady and led her to remark: "I thought Bethlehem was no longer on this earth."

In 1892, Lieutenant Colonel Conder said: "My letters were shelved in an English post-office because they were directed to me at Jerusalem, for the official thought 'all that was done away with.'"—The City and the Land, p. 32.

Bethlehem, the native place of Boaz, where Ruth lived and where Obed and David were born, has never ceased to be a town and never was destroyed, as were Jerusalem and Bethel. Bethlehem, moreover, never lost its identity, and has not ceased to exhibit the characteristics of antiquity; it retains more of the ancient Jewish types of village life and architecture than any other town of southern Palestine, for, excepting in the disappearance of the wall, it is probably unchanged in architecture and arrangement from what it was in the days of David, and now its streets are crowded with merchants selling fruits, flowers, grains, vegetables, cutlery, saddlery, clothing, furniture and ornaments, and mechanics of all kinds are pursuing their respective vocations.

The beautiful souvenirs of olive wood, mother of pearl, etc., made here, have been reverently carried to all the ends of the earth by devoted pilgrims.

Among its antiquities are the Well of David (2 Sam. 23:15); the Church of the Nativity, which stands on the spot where our Lord was born; the Chapel of the Angels, where the shepherds watched their flocks by night, and the field where Ruth gleaned (Ruth 2:15), and on the other side of the valley the mountain where Herod is said to have been buried.

Visit Bethlehem at, or immediately before, Christmas and you will see visitors from every quarter of the globe, ecclesiastical dignitaries and pilgrims of both sexes and of every age; noblemen of every rank, princes, kings and emperors; the brilliant, cultured and mighty have not ceased to visit this Judean mountain town which the chief priests declared to Herod was the appointed place of the birth of the Messiah, an event regarding which Prof. Dr. Robt. Steward, of Lincoln University, said: "The incarnation is the miracle of miracles, more wonderful even than the miracle of the resurrection." Dr. Steward's book, "Memorable Places Among the Holy Hills," is the most recent and among the most interesting on the subject.

In patriarchal times it was known as Ephrata, which denotes fruitfulness. Accordingly, as it were, here was manifested the fruit of God's love. Rev. 22:2.

In the days of Joshua and Boaz it was known as it is today as Bethlehem, by which the Hebrews understand the "House of bread," the Arabs "the House of meat," or flesh; thus at once pointing to the Bread of Life which is identical with the Lamb of God, whose flesh is "meat indeed." John 6:55.

The Little Dollar's Christmas Journey.

Condensed from out of "Mulberry Street," BY JACOB A. RIIS. Published by The Century Co.

Suitable for use in asking a Christmas offering.

Mrs. Lee, a widow whose small income came from the interest on some government bonds, had been reading in a magazine of children in city tenements who know little of Christmas joys. "One child shall have a Christmas tree," said she to herself, and she cut a dollar coupon and mailed it to the professor in the city to find the child. The coupon looked like a miniature dollar, and as the professor took it from the letter on the morning before Christmas, he said, "Ah, little dollar, I know where you are needed." He went down town to a narrow street with five-story tenements on either side. Entering one he groped his way through a dark hall to a rear room, where lived six children, and the baby was sick, and the father out of work. But there was a branch of evergreen in one corner which Johnnie had found by a church door. On it hung some colored newspaper pictures and three pieces of colored glass.

The professor brought out the little dollar. "A friend sends you this for Christmas. Buy something for the children and a good dinner for all." Mrs. Ferguson hurried to the grocery and carefully filled her basket, and gave the grocer the little dollar, but he refused to take it. As she was sadly putting down her precious bag of potatoes, a gentleman standing by interposed and gave the grocer a dollar bill for the coupon. As the gentleman went out on the street he met an old carter with an old horse, who did errands for the neighborhood. "See here, Thomas, take this and buy your horse a bag of oats, so he can keep Christmas," and the gentleman passed over the little dollar. The feedman sent the little dollar to the pawnshop to see if it were good, and the pawnbroker promptly handed over a dollar bill for it.

Later a young girl came in to the pawnshop and asked for the loan of three dollars on a watch. At first the pawnbroker would give but two, but at last he said, "Here, it is Christmas. I'll take the risk." And he added the coupon to the two dollars.

A little later the girl stood at a knit-goods counter picking out a shawl. The clerk objected to the coupon, but took it to the desk. The store-keeper came back and looked sharply at the girl, and then, saying that it was all right, graciously attended her to the door. As he stood there with the coupon in his fingers, he thought with satisfaction how busy the day had been in the store. A thin voice near by said, "Merry Christmas! Here's your paper!" The storekeeper knew the struggle life was to the newsboy, and he said, "Here's a dollar like yourself, it is small, but it is all right. Have a good time with it."

On reaching home, Mike found an ambulance in the midst of a crowd at the door of the tenement. As it drove off a little girl was left weeping on the top step. Her father had been carried to the hospital and tomorrow would be Christmas. Mike took a turn down the hall to think. "Here, Susie, you take this and let the kids have their Christmas. Mr.

Stein gave it to me. It's a little one, but it's all right."

There was a Christmas tree in Susie's flat, with candles and apples on it, but the little dollar rested securely in the purse of the charity visitor who had come in that afternoon, and who had given the children one dollar for the coupon, when she heard the story of Mike and his sacrifice.

"I heard such a story of a little newsboy today, at the meeting of our district charity committee." And the professor's wife told him the story of Mike and Susie. "And I just got the little dollar bill to keep." She took it from her purse and passed it to her husband. "What!" said the professor, as he read the number, "if here isn't my little dollar come back to me! I left it in Bedford Street this morning."

After a moment's pause the professor's wife said, "Jones' children won't have any Christmas tree. He told me this morning he couldn't afford one. Let us give them the little dollar." And they did. The Joneses and many others had a merry Christmas because of the blessed little dollar. If any one has locked up the Christmas dollar let him start it right out again.

Quotable Poetry.

THE ANGELS' SONG. (191)

It came upon the midnight clear,
That glorious song of old,
From angels bending near the earth,
To touch their harps of gold.
"Peace to earth, good-will to men,"
From Heaven's all-gracious King.
The world in solemn stillness lay
To hear the angels sing. —E. H. Sears.

KING OF HEARTS. (192)

Oh, what shall we sing
To Christ Jesus, our King,
On Christmas all holy?
His praises we'll sing;
Through the sky let them ring
From hearts meek and lowly.

Pure gold we will bring,
Fit gift for a King,
On Christmas all holy;
True love we will bring,
The best offering,
From hearts meek and lowly.

Self-sacrifice give,
And others forgive
On Christmas all holy;
This the myrrh we will give
To him who doth live
In hearts meek and lowly.

—L. D. C., in *Living Church*.

Len. G. Broughton, pastor of the Baptist Tabernacle, Atlanta, Ga., one of the leading preachers in the South, says: "I believe *Current Anecdotes* is the very best production of the kind."

Sermon in a Poem.

Christmas Hymns.

THE FOOL'S PRAYER. (193)

The royal feast was done; the King
Sought out some new sport to banish care,
And to his jester cried: "Sir Fool,
Kneel now, and make for us a prayer!"

The jester doffed his cap and bells,
And stood the mocking court before;
They could not see the bitter smile
Behind the painted grin he wore.

He bowed his head, and bent his knee
Upon the Monarch's silken stool;
His pleading voice arose: "O Lord,
Be merciful to me, a fool!"

"No pity, Lord, could change the heart
From red with wrong to white as wool;
The rod must heal the sin; but Lord,
Be merciful to me, a fool!"

"'Tis not by guilt the onward sweep
Of truth and right, O Lord, we stay;
'Tis by our follies that so long
We hold the earth from heaven away.

"These clumsy feet, still in the mire,
Go crushing blossoms without end;
These hard, well-meaning hands we thrust
Among the heart-strings of a friend.

"The ill-timed truth we might have kept—
Who knows how sharp it pierced and stung?
The word we had not sense to say—
Who knows how grandly it had rung?

"Our faults no tenderness should ask,
The chastening stripes must cleanse them all;
But for our blunders—oh, in shame,
Before the eyes of heaven we fall.

"Earth bears no balsam for mistakes;
Men crown the knave, and scourge the tool
That did his will; but Thou, O Lord,
Be merciful to me, a fool!"

The room was hushed; in silence rose
The King, and sought his garden cool,
And walked apart, and murmured low,
"Be merciful to me, a fool!"

—Edward Rowland Sill.

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The most popular of all Christmas hymns probably is "Hark! the herald-angels sing." This famous hymn was first published by Charles Wesley in 1739, when it began "Hark how all the welkin rings." From that date it has appeared in various hymnals with alterations by various editors. In one version, indeed, the opening stanza contained but a single word to be found in the original, that word being the exclamatory "Hark." As first published this hymn consisted of ten stanzas of four lines each, but was subsequently reduced to eight, then six, and, finally, to three extended stanzas of eight lines each, with the refrain—

"Hark! the herald-angels sing
Glory to the new-born King."

Apparently no manuscript of this hymn exists, though Mr. Kelly, the Book Steward at the Wesleyan Conference Office, thinks otherwise. One day he hopes to make a systematic search among the many hundreds of Charles Wesley's manuscripts now under his care, when he feels confident the original of "Hark! the herald-angels sing" will come to light.

It is rather curious that these hymnal manuscripts of Charles Wesley have only been discovered within comparatively recent years. The story of how they were found is an interesting one. It appears that soon after Mr. Kelly was appointed Book Steward he was going on a tour of inspection through the cellars of No. 2, Castle Street, when he came to a small underground room which was boarded up. On having the barricade removed it was discovered that the compartment contained many things of interest connected with the Wesleys, not the least important being some fourteen volumes of manuscript hymns in the handwritings of Charles, John, and Samuel Wesley. Together with these volumes were numerous loose sheets of paper on which the celebrated hymnists had written the first drafts of their compositions before copying them "fair" into the bound volumes. These loose sheets are extremely interesting, as they contain numerous corrections which convey some idea of what the first impressions of the hymnists really were.

Charles Wesley composed his hymns at all times of the day and night, never knowing when a fine line or verse would strike him. In order that these ideas should not be lost he was in the habit of carrying about with him a set of tablets on which many of his hymns were written. He would then copy out these rough notes on a sheet of quarto paper, correct and finally copy "fair" into a manuscript book. Charles wrote a beautifully clear hand, bold, and, as was his character, fearless and straightforward.

"Hark! the herald-angels sing" is said to be found in more hymnals than any other of Charles Wesley's compositions, not even excepting "Jesus, Lover of my Soul."

"Christians, awake, salute the happy morn"

(Continued on page 142.)

Homiletic Department.

G. B. F. HALLOCK, Editor.

GIST OF RECENT SERMONS.

BY JOHN WATSON, F. W. GUNSAULUS, DAVID GREGG, J. SPARHAWK JONES, WILTON MERLE SMITH, FRANCIS L. PATTON AND HENRY COLLIN MINTON.

AROUND THE CRADLE OF JESUS.

Text: "Unto him shall the gathering of the people be."—Gen. 49:10.

"Many have builded better than they knew" is a saying which has an illustration in this prophecy assigned to the patriarch Jacob and in the circumstances of Christ's nativity as described in the Gospels. No one will lightly assign the exact meaning of Jacob's beautiful words in the minds of the people, and no one will lay it down that the evangelists consciously described the fulfillment of that prophecy in the turning of all kinds of people to the manger at Bethlehem. But generations waited for Shiloh; and, when he came, not a king nor a conqueror, but a little child, the gathering of the people was to his lowly cradle.

Again the year has revolved, and Christian folk throughout the world commemorate the birth of the young child Jesus, and in doing so we celebrate the glory of innocence and meekness, of simplicity and tenderness. Let us also celebrate the attractive power of One, who, from the moment he entered into this world, has stirred human society to its very depths, has laid his hand upon every class, compelled the most powerful to consider him, drawn the most humble to worship him, revealed the beauty and purity, and satisfied the demand of wisdom, and has been the meeting place for the human race.

Consider the people who in person or in thought visited the manger-cradle of Christ.

I. The old man and the little child.

There was then in Jerusalem a just and devout man whose life was drawing to an end, whose thoughts had been lifted above the things which are seen, and fixed upon the things which are unseen. Amid the hollowness of Pharisaic religion and the formality of Temple worship, amid the worldliness and fanaticism of the people, Simeon waited for the consolation of Israel. It was laid upon him by the Holy Ghost that he should not pass from this world till the hope of the saints should be fulfilled to him. He came not to Bethlehem, for he was old; but his thoughts were with Christ and the Christ-child came to him; and, when he held Christ in his arms, he was ready to depart. When a man has made full trial of life and seen the end of all perfection, when he is old and frail, when his days must be few, and the world to come is hanging over him, then what better can he do than stretch out his arms unto Christ, who comes to him in all the freshness of his beautiful youth, and brings with him the promise of eternal life?

There were children then in Bethlehem who recked not of Christ in their happy carelessness and innocent joy, but they were also to be brought unto his side. Not by the hands of their mothers, as other children would be in days to come, but by the sword of Herod's

soldiers. They were to be the first companions of Christ by their martyrdom, and, as is the profound and beautiful conception of Holman Hunt, to follow him in triumph through his life. As the Christ-child himself was persecuted and afterwards was slain, so the first child friends of Christ were baptized into his fellowship with blood, that the children of after generations might come to his cradle with joy, and find that he who makes an aged heart to be green and glad after many years can keep a young heart innocent from the beginning of life. So the old folk and children meet round the Christ-child.

II. Gentle women and wise scholars.

Mary, as she tended Jesus in his manger-bed, is the type of simple and gracious womanhood—not a learned nor a distinguished person, not one to claim a foremost place or make a display in life, but a village girl, timid, retiring, meek, and lowly. She represents attractive maidenhood and filial loyalty, wifely duty and fond motherhood, gentle ministries and stainless purity. She had many deep thoughts, but they were hidden within her heart; many heavenly prayers, but they ascended in silence from her lips; and unto this most blessed of women, the model and expression of modest and winsome womanhood, Jesus came in the holy mystery of his incarnation. And still by his spirit he visits the souls of women, and leads them after him in their purity and devotion, in their visions and in their sacrifices.

At the other extreme from her simplicity are the wise men who represent the scholars and philosophers of that day, the men who had compassed the world of knowledge so far as it was open to them in their generation, and wrestled with those problems of thought which are common to all generations. Their answer had not come, but they believed that man can ask no question God is not prepared to satisfy; and, guided by the star which shines in every man's heart, rather than by the star in the heavens, they found their way to the manger of Bethlehem. And so many thinkers, poets, artists, discoverers have found their way since; for the music of modern times and also its drama, its science and its universities, have all had their birthplace in Bethlehem. The student has touched the heart of things when he reaches Christ.

III. The humble toiler and the crafty king.

The representatives of the working folk in that day were not artisans, but countrymen who cared for their flocks through the watches of the night, and to them also came the message of Shiloh. For the moment they abandoned their sheep, and took their way from the midst of labor to the Infant's cradle. For this Child had not been born into a palace, but into a village inn; not into plenty, but into poverty;

not into a life of ease, but into a long travail of hardship. The proletariat is sanctified in the Child of Mary, and the Son of the carpenter, and the great multitude of every age and of every nation whose lot it is to toil with their hands for their daily bread are understood and dignified; their labor is lightened and glorified by the Christ-child.

Word came also to the king in his palace, the other extreme from the shepherds, though not from an open heaven. He also bestirred himself to pay that kind of homage which befitted him and which he judged necessary. He was a strong king; crafty, unscrupulous, masterful, successful; but he could not be indifferent to this homeless Babe. He scented rivalry and danger; and he was right, for this innocent, helpless Child, that had no shelter but a manger, was to be a menace, not to kingly authority nor kingly rule—for Christ was ever an example of loyalty and obedience—but to royal tyranny and insolence, to royal oppression and cruelty. If he found not the Christ-child, it was not his blame. In his intention he came breathing hatred and murder, and the battle then began with the poor victory of the massacre of the innocents, and has gone on two thousand years between throned injustice and helpless innocence, and will continue till the power that stands in unrighteousness be broken in every land and the triumph of the innocents be complete.

IV. The homage of the Church and of the angels.

It was not wonderful that when all the other provinces of society were stirred, the church should also be moved over the coming of Christ. By the church, I do not here mean the saints who were represented by Simeon and Anna waiting in the Temple for the promise given by the prophet, but that visible and organized body represented by the priests and by the theologians. They were not drawn to Bethlehem by that heavenly inspiration which moved the wise men from their distant home and the shepherds from the fields. The question came before them as a matter of theological scholarship; and they declared that, according to the prophecy, Christ would be born in Bethlehem. It was a striking and beautiful prophecy, one fitted to touch the imagination and quicken the heart of religious people; but it was quoted with no more concern than an official might show in citing a statute. The scribes and Pharisees visited his cradle only as it were by a formal deliverance at the request of a king; and yet their successors, the rulers and theologians of the church, were to come in long procession to this mystery of the incarnation to find there the basis for the science of religion and the foundation for the Christian church. No man can count the volumes that have been written within the department of theology; no single mind can compass the numerous speculations touching all things in heaven and on earth; but, so far as they have any truth in them, they include the birth of this Child; so far as they have any life, they derive it from his eternal youth. Through all the ages the wisest of the church have been trying to understand this mystery, and the most gifted in speech to state it to mankind.

Nor need the most learned and profound of human minds be ashamed to bow itself before the cradle of Jesus; for this marvelous birth stirred heaven as well as earth, and has opened depths into which the angels desire to look. If theologians on earth ransacked ancient prophecy to verify the birthplace of Jesus, the heavenly powers burst into song over the advent, and began then their ministry, which continued during the life time of the Lord on earth, and has been transferred to the members of his body after him. Old and young, wise and simple, people and rulers, theologians and angels, each according to his own mind and in his own way, paid the homage of his interest at the birth of Jesus.

V. The birth that changed the race's destiny.

As the little country of Jewry was stirred on that day, so has the whole world since been stirred by the arrival of Jesus. No other birth has so profoundly affected human history or so changed the destiny of the human race. There is no school of thought, no organized government, no department of civilization, no class of people, which can be indifferent to the incarnation. The light from that village inn touches every idea and every movement through all the conquering nations of the world, and lights the church in her great mission unto every people. Beside his manger all conditions stand on an equality, all enmities must be laid to rest. There we come as life begins or life ends, with our questions, our cares, our sins, our sorrows, in the hope that by the power of the Holy Child we may be born again, leaving behind our pride, ambitions, cares, and fears, and passing into the peace which the angels sang, which Christ brought to earth—the peace of God, which passeth all understanding.—Rev. John Watson, D. D., "Ian Maclaren," Liverpool, England.

THE SIFTING OF PETER.

Text: "And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not; and when thou art converted strengthen thy brethren."—Luke 22: 32.

I. First, the purpose of the sifting.

Back a short distance we go in the life of Peter, and we hear his Master make a very definite announcement to him. His brother has just brought him to Jesus, and eyes which saw into both his frailties and possibilities, at the same instant, have beheld him. The great gem lies there all covered up with earth. His present character is a mixture of the low and the lofty. Jesus, however, says: "Thou art Simon—thou shalt be Peter." There was disclosed the great purpose of this worker in character, with respect to this unperceived jewel which had come into his hand. Every movement of the Master, whose infinite resources of skill and affection were to be drawn upon for the disclosing and developing of that latent possibility is henceforth interesting as related to that purpose. This act—the most bewildering and incomprehensible of all—must be but one step in the process of

bringing Peter out of Simon—the stone out from the environment which almost concealed it.

Notice, I beg you, the personalness of all this talk. It is a jewel worker, in the midst of many gems, upon which he is working, talking to one of them. Notice how the record preserves these features of Christ's ministry to all his disciples and to special disciples. But he looks at all the souls of his disciples as he speaks to this one, for he is doing the same with them, bringing Peter out of the Simon. In the text he says to this one, not addressing him as Peter, not telling him that the process which was long ago begun has been completed, but rather emphasizing the fact that his old characteristics are still unfortunately the most evident feature of his personality. "Simon, Simon," he says, right after the Simon character has shown itself most certainly. "Simon! Satan desires to sift you"—not "thee," but "you"—all of you. "But I have prayed for thee"—using the singular, emphasizing the special need of Simon above that of the others. "I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." Christ deals with classes; yet, while he deals with classes, his culture comes to the individual and accentuates every feature of his personality in its all-inclusive ministry.

Just as surely as there is a possible Peter in an actual Simon, and that Peter is to be brought out, just so sure will he be sifted. My friend, if today finds you blown upon by winds which seem unkind, if you are not allowed to rest mentally and spiritually, if from your very soul there seems to be torn every shred of courage and every husk of confidence, if even your Master seems to have given you over to evil, be sure that you bear in that fact, and carry in this very experience, the witness that an eye all-kind and all-true has looked into your frailties and possibilities, that Christ has seen within the Simon a Peter, that he believes in you—and that this experience is only a step in that once searching and excluding process which is set toward your noblest destiny. Take Peter again. Of what had he to be sifted? The very qualities certainly which had kept and protected the noble character which must ultimately free itself from them. He was over-confident in himself. He was rash, impetuous and daringly assertive in his self-trust. He alone said at once, when Christ suggested that the sheep should be scattered: "Though all the world forsake thee, yet not I; not I." He was imperious in temper, conceited in honesty, prayerless in generous loyalty, independent in enthusiasm, incautious in fearless faith. Now, these qualities, which partook of the very life of that Peter within, were the Simon external to them in which Peter had his life. Behold Peter in after years, after the Simon has been dropped away, and you see that the very straightforwardness of his best hours was away back here growing inside of that obstinate honesty; the high courage of his noblest act was being developed inside his rashness; the ardor of his warm heart was being fed by the reckless enthusiasm of youth; the confidence of his most glowing hour was protected, as it slowly grew in his

presumptuousness—only within a Simon may a Peter be matured, and at last disclosed.

II. Second—The method of this sifting of human character comes from the purpose behind it. Its purpose is the delivering of the wheat grain of one's true personality from the chaff which surrounds and clings to it. Somehow the soul must be delivered from all false strength. Now to deliver Peter from the false strength, from the Simon in which he has grown, requires severe sifting. So his trial was searching and severe. If there was one thing he was sure of, it was his own invincible devotion. It amounted to spiritual self-conceit. It towered up, and lifting him, it exalted this proud soul above his brethren. That, however, was a false strength, and his Master knew it. Real power lay in trusting the Christ's invincible love for him, not in confiding in his love for Christ. Real independence of spirit had its source in utter dependence on his Lord. So the sifting began. It was an awful, yet merciful process. Thrice did this self-confident man deny his Master. Away went vanity of spiritual prerogative! Away went Simon with his egotism; away went the impetuosity of daring self-trust in his honesty, as this confidently honest disciple worked his deceit when the fire shone into his haggard face; away went this enthusiastic devotee's reverence when he cursed and swore; away went Simon sifted so thoroughly, sifted so irrevocably—sifted from Peter. But Peter, no longer self-confident, but confident in Christ; no longer exultant over his love for Jesus, but exultant henceforth over Jesus' love for him; no longer the victim, but henceforth the master of his superb qualities—Peter was left, Simon was gone, when the sifting was done.

There is nothing in the power of evil in the world, so far as under the permissive providence of God, it sifts us, to destroy the concealed Peter which lies in every sifted Simon.

III. Third—So you see the first result of the sifting was Peter; the firm, sound, unincumbered, liberated Peter—so firm and true that he was truly the Rock. Upon this, his Master had a conversation with him which was to fasten his own conscious life this experience, and beginning it with the question to the old Simon, making Peter see that Simon was even then loosened by his growing life, and ultimately would be lost entirely. He concluded it by saying, even though afterward in the garden he should have the old Simon put the Peter in him asleep: "Thou art Peter and on this rock will I build my church." The sifting had most definitely resulted in true power to Peter. But like all real power, it was helpful, missionary, beneficent power—it did, as Christ bade it do, strengthen his brethren.

Forget the fleeing Simon at the crucifixion as you forgot the shaking Simon at the trial. See him after the resurrection of Jesus had put its comfort about the wounds where the Simon had been sifted away from Peter. Hear him at Pentecost as he sweeps again the mighty harp of Hebrew prophecy with his music-finding fingers. His eloquence was the eloquence of the Bible, the eloquence of experience, the eloquence of a courage sifted

of arrogance, the eloquence of an enthusiasm filled with the Holy Ghost. Hear the unquivering voice as he speaks out of the consciousness of power to the lame man at Solomon's porch: "Such as I have give I unto you." Power is going forth out of him and turning to the multitude, he pours out that matchless stream of truth, gleaming with a heavenly glory. There is the sifted Simon before the council. Calm with strength, sufficiently controlled for irony. Strong with a determination to admit no other mastery than that of God. Before the deceit of Ananias and Sapphira, before the purchasing ambition of Simon Magus, in prison and out of it, stands Peter pre-eminent, looking back upon the past self, often in an act suggesting too plainly the chaff of which Christ had freed him, but still teaching us the lessons of this event.

Weakness turned into power! His failure made it eternally helpful thing to his brethren in all ages. Shall we resist being made strong and true by the sifting of life? No; by God's help let us say: "Permit anything, Lord God, any trial, any sifting, only sift me out of my weakness, only bring out the Peter out of the Simon, and then let me by my sorrows and my sifted power strengthen my brethren."—Rev. Frank W. Gunsaulus, D. D.

INSECTS WITH WINGS, OR BEAUTIFIED SINS.

Text: "Every creeping thing that flieth is unclean unto you."—Deut. 14: 19.

The text is a precept from the dietetic and sanitary code under which God put his covenant people. The purpose of this code was one with that of the ritual of the tabernacle, viz: to teach and to beget holiness unto the Lord.

But it is not my purpose at this time to expound the dietetic and sanitary code which God gave the Hebrews; it is my purpose only to notice that this code had another characteristic besides the dietetic and sanitary. In the education of the Hebrews it had a symbolic characteristic. In an age when book-teaching was unknown, every day's abstinence from certain sorts of food was a constant teaching by symbolic object-lesson of the necessity to be watchful against any contact with or participation in sin.

The text is a pointed illustration of the symbolic character of the code. It carries in it a moral and religious lesson. It strikes at popular evils and at sins in high places. It warns against evil in the forms of gilded fascinations. It is a divine protest against admired and cultured evil, evil which sparkles and shines. It points out the kinship of all such evil to evil that is gross and vulgar. It proclaims the moral identity of all sin—the genteel and the shabby, the cultured and the crude, the attractive and the repulsive, the scientific and the ignorant, the poetical and the prosaic, the refined and the base. This is what the text tells us. It raises the alarm against creeping things with wings—*i. e.*, against evils adorned, and against Satan when he shines.

There is a natural disgust in every one to the idea of eating, or even handling, a creeping worm or caterpillar. This natural instinct of

which we speak, God saw fit to incorporate in his law to his people. He forbade their eating these repulsive, crawling things. Instinct was not enough; there must be instinct with a plus—instinct plus God's law. We know how the natural instincts are overcome by willful habits. We find degraded men taking pleasure in articles of food which the human palate originally and instinctively rejected. Hence the necessity of a law behind instinct. If sin in its grossest form be thus dangerous, what must be the unmeasured power of sin when it disguises itself and puts on robes of beauty and the forms and the shapes of virtue and art and science and progress—when it enthrones itself in fashion and in the palace of wealth, and when it claims the authority of antiquity? Sin as a caterpillar is bad enough; but sin as a butterfly is a thousand times worse. It is sin captivating the eye and winning the admiration of the whole race. The text is a warning to the men and women who are in love with immoral butterflies. It deals not with gross and vulgar sinners, but with refined and elegant sinners; with those who lead society and give tone to public sentiment. These detest the crawling worm most heartily; their refinement is such that all sins in gross forms repel them; but alas! they are repulsive, not because they are sin, but because they are gross.

The wings and pretty colors have not altered the nature of vermin. The same uncleanness is there as before.

Let us see how sin popularizes and beautifies itself. This will help us to keenness in the discernment and the detection of sin. The great desideratum with the multitudes is just this: they do not recognize sin when they meet it.

I. Sin beautifies itself by assuming and wearing the wings of wit. Wit can be just as wicked as it pleases, and yet be popular. To be witty is all the excuse that evil finds necessary for its being. There is a perfect craze for a joke, and there is no form in which sin and the devil so frequently enter the best society.

We all know the power of wit in making an out-and-out lie acceptable to a community, and in giving it currency. Men abhor a bungling, stumbling lie; but let the same lie cleverly incarnate itself in a joke and fill itself with laughing humor, let it get some one to tell it admirably, and at once it becomes popular. Men are proud to repeat it. They circulate it for the pleasure which it gives. It is an illustration of the fine art of lying. It is dramatic. They are so taken up in admiring the exquisite dexterity of the form in which it is told, that they never think of hating its immoral substance. But it is a lie all the same, and its untruth, and its unchaste thought, soaring and flying around society upon the merry ripples of laughter, do their fatal work with a greater deadliness than the vulgar lie that goes about condemned in its native unadorned deformity. It is the duty of the Christian to clip the wings of wit when genius uses them as an adornment for the immoral caterpillar. It is the duty of Christians to buy only and read only expurgated editions.

II. Sin beautifies itself by assuming and wearing the wings of fashion.

Whatever fashion prescribes is law. Whatever is in fashion needs no defense or argument. For example, fashion prescribes dress, and sometimes the boldness of the attire which it prescribes is administrative of evil, but the dress obtains. Unfashionable people may find fault, but fashionable people, never. They give no thought to the morals of a dress. It has come from a fashionable establishment and a fashionable price has been paid for it, and there is no ground for any exercise of thought or of conscience. I beg the pardon of fashion, but there is ground for both thought and conscience; and there is a personal responsibility to be met here. The fashionable establishment sins every time it sends out an immoral costume, that is true; but more than that, the woman of society every time she dons the costume condones and indorses and beautifies the sin of the establishment, and gives it permanency and life and corrupting power. There is no carnal power in all the world so mighty as a beautiful woman of fashion arrayed in a carnal dress.

For example, fashion prescribes the mode in which we shall live; it determines the rate of our expenses. In our day it has put the stamp of its approbation upon extravagance of living; and we Christian people fall into the line of the common life. There is a fascination in extravagance. There are moral consequences involved in an extravagant life. It cannot be kept up without money, and where money is needed there is always a temptation to dishonesty and crooked methods. No Christian should let the extravagance of fashion so separate him from his fellow men, whom God has commissioned him to help, that he cannot know their wants or sympathize with their needs.

III. Sin beautifies itself by putting on the wings of art.

When sin would become tolerable, it comes to art and asks it to embellish it. When art has given it graceful forms and the witchery of color, it knows that it will be sought and admired. It knows that its suggestive carnality can find ingress into the soul through a picture and a statue when it can find ingress and opportunity for work in no other way. The realism of art has introduced more animalism into humanity than any other instrumentality. It has opened an avenue into the deepest depth of the soul for all manner of foul thoughts. Sin in the beauties of art is evil dressed in such a way that men cannot hate it. It is the harlotry of wickedness. No propagator of sin should call out more our honest red-hot scorn than the corrupt artist, or the corrupt poet, or the corrupt musician, who sells his skill and genius for the purpose of making evil thought enchanting.

It is fashionable to be posted in art. Every one who knows anything must be a critic in art and a lover of art. Sin recognizes this, and seeks through art an open door into thousands of homes and lives. In the name of art people go to the playhouses to witness the performances of actors of questionable character. In the name of art they fill their parlors with

bathing nymphs and demi-monde scenes, which give rise to thoughts that are not Christian. I ask the question: Is it right for those who are washed in the blood of Christ, and who seek the sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit, to enter willfully into a social life where books and pictures and statuary and entertainments are unblushingly promotive of the growth of the lower man? Let us see to it that the statuettes on our brackets, and the statues on our pedestals, and the books of engravings on our tables, and the pictures on our walls, shall be as pure in God's sight and as promotive of holiness as the prayers which we offer at our family altars. I argue for chaste sounds, and chaste colors, and chaste forms. These, to my mind, are the essentials of true art, as true art is approved by the laws of our holy God.

IV. Sin beautifies itself by putting on the wings of pleasing and attractive names.

It decks itself in the beauties of euphemisms. It studiously robes itself in the robes of a poetic and a moral nomenclature. This has always been the method of sin, and it seems to be necessary to its success. It calls good evil and evil good, and in this way sears the conscience. It blackens the white and whitens the black. It stigmatizes "conscientiousness" "good-fellowship." It thus blurs the distinction between right and wrong, and wrong and right.

Perhaps in no sphere in life are the wings of a false nomenclature so widely spread as in the mercantile sphere. All manner of dishonesty is beautified and glossed over by euphemisms.

My fellowmen, I ask you to consider the value of using right and natural and simple names in dealing with sin. The real and true name of sin is the best expose of sin. The real and true name of sin is the best protector and the best educator of our moral senses. The real and true name of sin is the best organ for the expression of a righteous indignation against sin. There is one supreme thing which God seeks to set forth with the clearness of the noonday before the immortal soul, and that is: all sin is unclean; all sin is abhorrent; all sin is deadly.

In closing allow me to say that the chief thing which we all need to reach is God's idea of sin. Have we God's idea of sin? Do we know its nature, do we know its awful consequences? We must know these things if we are ever to take the right attitude toward sin. How can we know these? There is only one way, but that one way is all-sufficient. It is this: full and complete fellowship with Jesus Christ, the pure and holy son of God.

There are searching revelations of sin in Christ's life and in Christ's words; but the highest revelation of all is in Christ's cross. In the cross sin has grown to its harvest; it has come to its full fruitage. What a brood of black things are gathered about the cross! Sin made the cross a necessity. Sin erected the cross. Sin drove the cruel crucifical nails. Sin crushed the crown of thorns into the holy temples of the Christ. Sin poised and thrust the murderous spear. Sin extorted the orphan cry. In the cross you see the tremendous daring of sin; it is not afraid to strike at the

very heart of God. Now remember, all sin is one—the same in nature and in essence. It differs only in degree and manner of manifestation. Calvary strips the world of all its masks. It uncovers it and reveals the depth of its wickedness.

In the light of Calvary I see sin in all its forms to be bitter uncompromising antagonism to God. It is the one thing of all things from which the immortal soul must be freed if it is ever to become God-like, and if it is ever to reach its possible goal, and if it is to enfold its inherent beauties throughout the ages of a happy eternity.—Rev. David Gregg, D. D.

PAUL ABOARD.

"Paul said to the centurion and to the soldiers. Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved."—Acts 27: 31.

Plutarch, in his *Lives of Illustrious Men*, says that Julius Cæsar, on a stormy night, crossing a channel in a light, open boat, quieted the alarm of the oarsmen who were ferrying him by telling them, "Pluck up your courage; you carry Cæsar." This great Roman had faith in his destiny. A secret presentiment bade him believe that he was born to achieve a notable career. He was conscious of power, of resource, and had a profound belief in his star. His reported language sets up a striking parallel to the case of the Apostle Paul. Their state of mind was much the same, and their words were equivalent in meaning. In both of these extraordinary men a thorough, deep-seated conviction found utterance—that they did not belong to the common herd of indifferent, routinary persons of no significance and who had no particular errand in the world.

This was not egotism nor personal vanity in either of them; it was a presentiment, a persuasion that they were born to effect something memorable and enduring upon earth. This forefeeling has often been a note of forceful men and women.

I. Paul was one of the great, masculine souls of our species because he had this divination, this strong undercurrent of certitude that he was allied to the God of history and had a part to play in the evolution of a divine plan.

These qualities are conspicuous on the voyage to Rome. A passenger and a prisoner, it yet does not occur to him to be officious or meddlesome, to offer his unprofessional opinion even to men who were supposed to understand their craft. With the sure instinct of a great original man, he knows that he is right, and hence counsels the ship's officers to lie quiet at Crete during the season of storm. When, at length, they had sailed into the big, black heart of it and into chaotic darkness, and heard the breakers dash upon the rocks, Paul points it out as the vindication of his practical wisdom and seamanship, albeit he was a plain Christian preacher and no professional navigator at all. The Roman centurion was evidently impressed by the robust manhood of his prisoner and his native force of character. After all, it is a great advantage to be constructed and put together on large principles—a mighty soul, a strong, clear,

fertile mind, energy, insight, a noble nature, a sound mental and moral organization; these are inestimable goods. You need not set a crown on his head—that man is a king already.

II. But observe again that the ground of Paul's confidence, under the trying circumstances, was a supernatural suggestion. An angel, a vision of some sort, had accosted him during the night giving assurance that, as for him, he must stand before Cæsar. Clearly he believed in an invisible world of mind, will and moral agency behind this phenomenal scene of nature. Paul believed that personality and purpose reign over the universe, not chance, and that there is possible communion or commerce between the two spheres, of nature and the supernatural, and that finite man may come into a real relation and conference with God.

Unless this world rests on a transcendental ground, it matters little how soon the euroclydons rise and blow it to bits. If man have no errand to do in this world; if he be simply born to eat up the corn, and to be rolled round with rocks and tombs and trees; if the ideas of God, immortality, duty, righteousness are a mirage; if there be no holy, omnipotent will at the root of things; if time be not the stage for the historical unfolding of an intelligent divine purpose; if God be not gradually working through the slow secular ages toward finer issues and a larger manifestation of himself; if earth and man and the whole nature-realm are sprung of protoplasmic slime and have been lifted into shape by the eternal, inexorable energy of a blind evolution, instead of being mighty shadows, flung by an ultimate reality—if there be no moral meaning implicated in man or nature, then the sun may well burn out and the globe stop on its axle.

Verily, it is a tremendous truth that the world stands for the sake of a moral purpose. Groaning in pain, rocking with earthquake, belching out fire and smoke from volcanic vents, holding within itself in air and in subterranean centers combustibles that could hurl it into the pit of annihilation, the great and gracious God keeps this earth spinning serenely and securely around its orbit, holding terrific energies in leash and under control subject to the gradual out-working of his perfect idea for the children of men.

What intrinsic value is there in commerce, trade, banking, coal and gold mining, in politics, philosophy or mechanical invention, in any established fact or fixture, to make it worth while to perpetuate the human family and save the world from sinking? You cannot find firm footing until you alight upon the continent of moral ideas and the supernatural. All that is bad in the world survives on account of what is good. The selfish, the depraved, the destructive, the obstructive, the animalish, all the vicious elements last only because there is something sound and wholesome left. If there were nothing but corruption and decay, the world would fall to pieces. It is because there are a few grains of salt here and there that society holds together. If there were not a moral ingredient, some pure and high feeling, noble ambition, spot-

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less integrity, heroic self-sacrifice, spiritual faith left among sinful men, the crash would surely come.

This imposing materialistic luxurious civilization which men build up and extol will not save society. It is mere splendid rubbish.

III. Observe, further, that although the announcement of the mysterious angel was explicit and Paul's confidence predicated upon it absolute, yet when the crisis came upon which the whole question of safety hinged, Paul's language was practical and peremptory.

I commend Paul's method of dealing with vexed questions in the sphere of religion. His doctrine concerning the nature and attributes of God, the divine omniscience and veracity, serves as an adamant base upon which to build an unwavering assurance of his personal safety; but mark, he does not push it into an ultraism, a fanaticism, or beat his silly head against rocky mysteries; he listens to the voice of practical reason and declares, "Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved." Apart from metaphysical theology and alongside of it, there is also a sphere of second causes and of moral agency and accountability. If the end is foreordained, the means leading up to it are equally necessary. This is the true relation subsisting between the doctrines of revealed religion and the practical duties of life.

There is in man the speculative reason and the practical reason. The one is critical and prying, seeks out final causes and hidden origins, and gets only a moderate satisfaction at present. The other is articulate, peremptory, positive, and says distinctly, "Except these abide in the ship ye cannot be saved." It does not curiously inquire how prayer affects the mind of God. It says, Ask, seek, knock. It does not inquire why God has chosen to reveal himself by an incarnation, and by the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It simply accepts the transcendent fact and acts upon it. Take Paul's practical logic into your life. He knew two things—one, an inflexible certainty that could not be annulled; the other, a plain, practical duty that must go along with it as its complement. Nor did the two clash. Each stood firm on its own proper ground. So, too, do ye be assured that there is nothing in the mystery of God or in the nature of things to excuse from conscious duty. Duties are ours, even though the doctrines and reasons that underlie them be obscure and unintelligible.—Rev. J. Sparhawk Jones, D. D.

CHRISTIANITY'S OBJECT LESSONS.

Text: "Living epistles, known and read of all men."—2 Cor. 3:2.

Truth is not easily grasped in the abstract and theories seem to go begging nowadays. Unless they are enforced by illustrations, they fail of general acceptance, and the reason is that the human mind does not readily grasp abstract truth. It must have proof and illustration. If I could present religion as a material thing, so that one's eyes might see, and

one's hands handle it, and one's mind behold its every working, instantly it would commend itself with the same irresistible power. But when we ministers must present it as a law of life, as an influence from on high working upon the heart, we often see that our propositions, though they be God's eternal truth, fail of ready acceptance. And we know the reason is that the human mind demands object lesson, teaching an illustration.

Hence Christianity needs some practical illustration of her theories and formulas. And where is that object lesson? Christianity's object lesson must be individual Christians, "epistles known and read of all men." Christianity in theory is powerless to touch the heart; Christianity crystallized into character is living, burning eloquence.

So then, Christians, when I teach men this way of life and they ask me for proofs, I must point them to you. There is a deep sense of responsibility in that thought. Christianity rests her claim, her argument upon you, upon your consistent Christlike character. She can never fail unless her death blow comes from the inconsistent lives of her professed followers. Oh, the power of a holy Christian character! No argument takes hold like that. It is worth all the logic of centuries, all the studied volumes of theology. If argument has won its thousands, character, the life behind the argument, has won its tens of thousands.

I. First, the power of truth proven in a life. Christianity is only one of the many life theories or religions. There are other systems that claim equal truth, challenging men to accept them. Christianity, like the others, must be tested by its fruits. If another faith can more-satisfactorily solve the problem of my life, can better cleanse my heart from sin, can give me better peace, assurance and joy, then beyond question it must take precedence of Christianity. But tell me what other faith has a tithe of Christianity's power over life? The world reads Christians a great deal more than it reads the Bible. Is it reading a victory of Jesus Christ in you and in your life? Thank God, in numbers of lives the power of Jesus Christ is a proven fact, and many there are who are illustrating in their sanctified and holy living the power of Christ, their blessed Master. Thank God for these epistles known and read of men.

We do not realize, dear friends, the power of Christian life and character because we do not realize how unconsciously its influence is exerted. Will you let me recur to an illustration I once used? I was interested in the study of electricity and the subject of induced currents. If two wires be strung near each other and a strong current be sent over the one, it induces upon the one that hangs near it a weak reproduction of itself. That is the reason why sometimes when you talk through your telephone you can hear other voices. The wires are not crossed, as you thought, but a current that is passing over a wire hanging near the wire you are using induces a weak reproduction of itself upon the one you are using. This is called an induced current.

Now, the same thing is happening every day in society. Why was it when you stood the

other day before a friend who was intensely selfish you instantly had to fight the same temptation in your own life? The reason was that the strong current of selfishness with which that life was filled induced a weak reproduction of itself in your own breast. So sometimes when you stand before lives that are pure, Christlike, and holy, you have felt the induced current that has called you to better things. There is no life so pure that it will not feel the induced current when standing before that which is holy, true and Christlike. The whole question of moral influence in life is a question of induced currents. My friend, you cannot live a Christian life without having influence going out from it.

This living of our religion day by day gets larger and larger as we think of it. The world may not notice us, we may not have the plaudits of the multitude. But the people who live their religion faithfully, quietly, before God and before men, are ever winning men to Jesus Christ, because they are ever interpreting the character of God and because they stand as object lessons of what God can do with human hearts and human lives.

II. Now, let me turn to the second thought; namely, that the power of Christian living is the power of truth enforced by personality. Truth and personality must work together. Either one is insipid weakness without the other. By some divine ordainment God has so arranged it that they two must be wedded. In every great reform in the world's history you will notice that the truth in it has never triumphed until it has been lifted in glowing utterances in the life of some one who has been inspired by that truth. The power of the Reformation was its truth, fired in Luther's and kindled into flames in the burning words of Knox. Modern slavery met its death blow only when the truth involved leaped to utterance in the glowing personalities of Sumner and Garrison.

The little carbon loop hangs in your electric lights, a dull thing seemingly devoid of power. The electric current is stored in your batteries or dynamos, undetected and unseen. Either one seems useless without utility or power. But make the necessary connection. Let this subtle fluid with its mystic power charge the carbon and there flashes out the brilliancy of the electric light. Just so it is with truth and personality. Truth is hidden and unseen without personality. Personality is dull and uninspired except when lighted up by truth. But let truth charge the person and there flashes on the world the brilliancy and glory of a man inspired and fired as it were by truth. Truth leaps to utterance only in personality. Personality becomes living, burning eloquence only when inspired by truth.

This, today, is the power of Christian life and character. It is the power of truth enforced and vivified by personality. Christianity gets its real utterances in the lives and at the lips of Christians. This, today, is the greatest power on earth. Men put off the shoes of their feet before one who is intensely and deadly in earnest. Evil shrinks and cowers away before the eye that flashes truth, and the brow that is illumined by it.

"Known and read of all men!" How that truth would startle us if we only realized it. Oh, Christian, the world is watching you! Did you ever realize before what it was to be living epistles?

My friends, let me scan your lives; let me read these epistles. I must tell men to look at Christianity as illustrated right here. What are you then? Epistles that cast shame upon the cross, epistles that are proofs of its inability to save and help and cleanse? Or do you so honor your Lord that you are object lessons of victory of Jesus Christ our Lord?

Oh, may God make us realize the inconsistency and the depth of failure in our own lives, that with broken-hearted surrender once more we may get at his feet, and may be refilled and re-equipped for the hard struggle to live his life in the world, and to do his will among men. Will you abide there with me, with broken hearts, with confessed sense of failure and shame, because as living epistles the world has read so little of Jesus in our lives?—Rev. Wilton Merle Smith, D. D., in *Record of Christian Work*.

SIN AND SALVATION.

Text: "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."—2 Cor. 5: 21. "And he is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."—1 John 2: 2.

Christianity is the way of salvation. Now let us understand that. If there is nobody drowning, you need not launch the lifeboat, but once you have launched the lifeboat don't think you are on a picnic. One thing or the other. If there is no peril there is no use talking about a way of salvation. If there is peril, it is time to do something. It is not the claim of ethics. It is the way of salvation. It is the way.

I. Now everything, of course, depends upon what you mean by sin. The current doctrine of sin, the Pauline doctrine, we all understand. Paul talked about the exceeding sinfulness of sin. We talk about the inevitable results of heredity and environment. Now you have to settle your account with this doctrine of sin before you realize that there is any need of salvation. If you have a purely naturalistic view of sin, then you read the eighth chapter of Romans in this wise, "There is no peril, and there is, therefore, now no condemnation for anybody." But, if there is peril, then the question is, How are you going to get out of it?

1. Now, there are three generic answers to that question. One answer, a heartless, cold-blooded answer, which is very prevalent, is to stop sinning. As long as you sin you are going to suffer for it. There is an inevitable connection between sin and suffering. Stop sinning and then you will stop suffering. There is, therefore, under these circumstances no condemnation, now you have stopped sinning. This is the doctrine of law without love.

2. The second answer is, Don't worry about it. You be nice and God will be nice. God is your Father and, therefore, there is

now no condemnation under these circumstances. This is the doctrine of love without law.

3. And the third doctrine is the doctrine of the union of law and love in the atoning blood, which is the Gospel. "He was made sin for us who knew no sin." "And he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." This is the old-fashioned doctrine of the atonement. Now the question is, Which of these three are you going to take? what theology are you going to preach?

II. When you go out to save souls are you going to have one religion for the masses and another for the intellectually elite? Are you going to have one religion for the tent meeting and evangelistic campaign and another for the theological seminary? There is only one kind of religion that will do for you and for me, for the college graduate as well as for the people in the slums, and that is, "the old, old story of Jesus and his love." When the Apostle Paul discusses this question of sin and salvation he says there are two ways of looking at it. There is the objective side and the subjective side. There is something done *for* me and something done *in* me, and you don't get a complete round view of truth until you take both these conceptions.

The trouble with the theology of this day is that it is one-sided. You get a man who will see the objective side and nothing else. He talks about the blood, the blood, the blood. And you get a man who will talk about the subjective side. He talks about being good, true and charitable. Neither of them sees the roundness of truth.

III. We are going to look first at the objective side and then at the subjective side.

Now, if there is anything true in the New Testament, it is that this New Testament records a transaction done for you and for me. We will call it the death of Christ. There are two ways of looking at it. But whether you call it Christ's atonement or man's justification, it is the same transaction. It is the same distance whether you call it height or whether you call it depth. It depends upon the point of view. It is the same curve whether you call it concave or convex. It depends upon the point of view. So with the death of Christ. It depends upon the point of view. From the Godward side it is the atonement; from the human side it is man's justification.

1. Take it first as Christ's atonement. Look at the passages in the New Testament about the atonement. If there is anything clear in those passages it is that Christ died a substitutionary death, a vicarious death, a penal death, a propitiatory death, a death by which man was justified.

2. Now take it as man's justification. What is justification? It is looking at a man as if he were good when he is not. He is bad enough, God knows, but he is not treated as though he were—because the righteousness of Christ is treated as his. When does he get it? Right on the spot. How does he get it? By the exercise of faith. And how

does he get into this state of faith? By trusting in God.

Now there is the subjective part of it—something has been done for us. There are a lot of people who seem to think everything is wrapped up in the atonement, and that all they have to do is to believe in Christ and they can do as they will in the outward life. There are some people who will not sing the hymn, "A charge to keep I have," "I have no charge to keep," they say. "God has done that for me. Get away from your sanguinary theology and take this view, That Christ died in order to enlist the sympathies of men, died in order to make men feel what an awful thing sin is, to show them how good he was." If I jump overboard to try to save a drowning child, I try to accomplish something; but if I say to the mother in the boat, "My dear woman, I love that child so much that I am willing to jump overboard and drown myself for it," when there is no danger, I do a very foolish thing. In the atonement Christ did something. We were drowning and he rescued us. Jesus died a sacrificing death for the sake of mankind, he accomplished something that would not otherwise have been accomplished. This is the doctrine of the atonement.

I read in the New York papers the other day that they were going to hang a man the next morning who was dying of pneumonia. Now, suppose that some friend should be interested in his behalf, and obtain a pardon for him. That would not help him any. He would escape the gallows, but die of pneumonia. Suppose another friend should have the best specialist in pulmonary diseases brought to the bedside. That would not help him. He would escape death in one form only to meet it in another. What he wants is something done *for* him and something done *in* him. That is just our case. The work of Christ's atoning regeneration is something done for us and in us. That is our philosophy of salvation.

IV. In closing, there is one question I would like to ask you. Suppose all this is true and you believe it is true, where did all these ideas originate? That is the question. In whose mind did they first exist? I suppose you would agree with me that they existed in God's mind. Well, if they existed first in God's mind, how long do you think he had them? How long since he began to have them? I suppose you would say he has always had them. Very well. This is all the theology I want you to have on this subject—that the relationship of sin, and salvation, and atonement, and justification, and sanctification, and regeneration is a scheme that existed eternally in the Divine mind. The scheme of salvation makes God big enough to be the infinite God of the universe; it is a scheme that looks at the great totality of things. Friends, in the exercise of your thinking, see what splendid stretches of thought stretch before the vision of the man who will read God's thought after him—Rev. Francis L. Patton, D. D., Princeton, N. J., in *Record of Christian Work*.

THE PRE-EMPTIONS OF FAITH.

Text: "Unto this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance the land."—Josh. 1: 6.

It is a striking fact that Joshua was commanded to divide the land of Canaan among the tribes of Israel before those tribes had obtained actual possession of a single square foot of the land to be divided. Canaan was still in the hands of the formidable Canaanites. If possession is nine points of the law, then the enemies of Israel had the nine points in their favor. In the language of the markets, the only title which the Israelites held was "on paper." It was only "the land of promise." And yet in a most business-like and matter-of-fact way, Joshua proceeds to distribute the land among the tribes. All this is allegory, as well as history. Herein is a principle not confined to the ancient Israel and Canaan. The land of promise was yet only a region of possibilities. Great difficulties stood in the way. Much fighting was yet to be done. Every true life duplicates the lesson. Youth is a prophecy of manhood and our sublimest achievements are only the proving up of titles long since held good by faith. In this poor world, every good thing comes with a struggle and the land of promise becomes the land of possession only at the cost of victory over stubborn and conspiring foes.

I. Each tribe had a definite aim. The first condition of success in life is to see what is our lot in the land that lies ahead. Men that scatter never succeed; whoever does nothing in particular, does nothing at all. Under God, this life is what we make it and, under God, what we make it depends on what we design that it shall be. Every life is a plan lived out. Every share in the promised land of achievement and success waits for the man who has faith to foresee it as distinctly his own. God fixes the lot and every man is at his best in the pursuit and, by and by, in the possession of that lot. Just as every tribe had its share, so every man has his destiny. God makes the man and God places the work before him, and only when God's man is doing God's work do we hear the smooth harmonies of genuine success. His hand has marked out our path. His providence has placed us at the start ^{ag} point and his grace furnishes us with forces and weapons with which to fight our way to the farthest goal. No two men have good titles to the same inheritance. The waiting Canaan was wide enough for all the weary tribes. Talents indicate tendencies and aptitudes are a call to action.

II. But the richest thought suggested is concerning the anticipations of the Christian's faith. Israel regarded Canaan as already theirs. And yet, they must go in and conquer it. The child of God is heir to a glorious inheritance, but it is to him an inheritance of virgin soil. He stands at this end and heaven at the other end of a long and crooked way and it is only the valiant pilgrim who will complete the trying journey. The future is very much what we make it; our inheritance awaits our valor; we have the title of the

promise; but unless we summon every energy and fight every foe, led by the Guiding Hand and nerved by the faith that counts the promise as sure as fact, the inheritance will be forever unclaimed and the title will only stand to taunt our memory of opportunities unimproved and of possibilities lost.

III. This warfare is long and tedious, and few are the warriors who are not tempted at times to throw down their weapons and surrender to the enemy. But we do not know much about God's uses of failure and defeat. Nature abounds in failures and the world overflows with waste. And yet, may we not well believe that, according to the lexicons of heaven, there is no such thing as consecrated waste? It was Judas Iscariot who charged Mary with having wasted the ointment. The teachings of our Lord show us that faithfulness is his synonym for success; and we shall do well to conclude that this margin of so-called wasted energies shall brighten the lustre of our achievement, and that these mis-called failures shall, by a loving Father's blessing, school us and fit us for a higher service and a holier life in the land in which our share awaits our coming.

IV. Israel fought long and hard, but Israel never made Canaan fully their own, in fact. They compromised with their enemies and those enemies remained to vex them in the land that might have been wholly their own. Compromise was, in the end, defeat. The saddest spectacle in all the universe of God is an immortal failure. Israel's responsibilities were measured only by the franchise of the promise. Let us study the maps of the spiritual Canaan of our God. Let us search the titles to the real estate of the soul. Let us learn what God calls us to do and then bend every energy to meet that call. Let no man invade our realm; let no man take our crown; let no man rob us of our share in the land of promise.

V. This is the victory that overcometh the world even our faith. Abraham went forth into a land whither he knew not, and when the command came to sacrifice the only condition of the fulfillment of Jehovah's promise and of his own pious soul's devoutest hope, he faltered not—and he became the Father of the Faithful and his seed became as the sand of the seashore innumerable. Joseph died down in Egypt, but he had faith to believe that the plan of God would yet work out and so he exacted an oath from his people that they should carry his bones with them when they should go up into the land of promise. The promises of God are as unchangeable as the eternal hills. Let him be true though every man a liar. Doubting his word is the sin that kills. We must learn to build on that.

"For right is right since God is God,

And right the day must win;

To doubt would be disloyalty,

To falter would be sin."

—Rev. Henry Collin Minton, D. D.

Rev. E. D. Holtz, Thompson M. E. Church, Wheeling, W. Va.: "I like Current Anecdotes. It is full of practical suggestions. Every preacher should have it."

The Homiletic Year—December.

By Rev. G. B. F. HALLOCK, D. D.

CHRISTMAS.

CHRISTMAS TEXTS AND THEMES.

Tidings of joy.—Isa. 12: 2, 3; 52: 9, 10; 61: 1-3; 1 Pet. 1: 8, 9.

Tidings of salvation.—Isa. 52: 7; Luke 3: 4-6; Gal. 1: 3-5; Tit. 2: 11-14.

Tidings of peace.—Luke 1: 78, 79; John 14: 27; Acts 10: 36; Rom. 5: 1.

Immanuel.—God with us.—Matt. 1: 23; John 1: 1, 14; 2 Cor. 5: 18, 19; 1 Tim. 3: 16.

The sign of God's love.—Jer. 31: 3; John 3: 16, 17; Eph. 2: 4-7; 1 John 4: 9, 10.

Freely ye have received, freely give.—Matt. 10: 8; Rom. 1: 14; 1 John 3: 16, 17; 4: 11.

Divine Life Born Into the World: "Made of the seed of David according to the flesh; declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead."—Rom. 1: 3, 4.

The Complete Manifestation: "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken to us by his Son."—Heb. 1: 1, 2.

His Glorious Coming Commands Our Worship: "We have seen his star in the East, and are come to worship him."—Matt. 2: 2.

God's Love Made Visible: "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation."—Luke 2: 29, 30.

Life and Death the Servants of Our Redeemer: "Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel; for they are dead which sought the young child's life."—Matt. 2: 20.

THE FOUNDATION FACT:

Matt. 1: 20, 21.

The foundation fact of our Christianity is the Incarnation. What is the Incarnation? This is the Incarnation—the veritable, actual entrance of Deity into our humanity. And the method of that entrance was by birth.

Let the light of the Scripture accounts of the Incarnation fall upon it as to the birth of Jesus—the mission of Jesus—the attraction of Jesus.

I. The birth of Jesus.

Specially notice the birth was supernatural. See St. Matthew 1: 18-21, also St. Luke 1: 26-35. Too many in these days are saying that the birth of Jesus was simply a natural one; that he was therefore man only, possessing, however, unusual capacity for feligion. But never give place to such notion. It is the shattering of the foundation fact of our religion. We should hold to the actually supernatural birth of Jesus for reasons like these:

1. Because the Scriptures distinctly assert it.

2. Because it is this fact of actual Incarnation which rescues our Christianity from being a philosophy merely, into being a revelation. If Jesus were no more than Socrates or Plato, if he was born just as these men were, then his teaching was no more than their teaching—a philosophy only, a human guessing at the riddles of the universe. But if Deity himself has actually, by supernatural birth, entered into humanity, then nothing can be more certain than that his teaching is divine disclosure, is unique and authoritative revelation from Deity himself.

3. Because the life of Jesus is inexplicable upon any other supposition than that of the supernatural birth.

And this is the real heart and meaning of the Christmas time—the actual intrusion of Deity into humanity and by supernatural birth. And such revelation by real Incarnation is the revelation we need. "I like Christianity," said young Arthur Hallam, of whom Tennyson sings in the "In Memoriam," "because it fits into all the folds of one's nature."

II. The mission of Jesus: "He shall save his people from their sins."

And notice that he does not attempt to do it in any distant way. By Incarnation he identifies himself with those he saves. He stoops to lift. How real our need of being saved since he must do it! How measureless the love prompting the doing of it!

III. The attraction of Jesus.

How he who came to us in Incarnation does attract! How the various spell about his 'supernatural birth is illustrative of his steady and increasing empire as the years go!

1. This Jesus draws to himself the lowly, *e. g.*, the shepherds.

2. This Jesus draws to himself the longing, *e. g.*, Simeon and Anna.

3. This Jesus draws to himself the scholarly and learned, *e. g.*, the magi.

Now, in this Christmas time, have you appreciated the mighty fact it celebrates; accepted the salvation the fact makes possible; yielded to the attraction the fact sways?—Rev. Wayland Hoyt, D. D.

THE SOBER SIDE OF CHRISTMAS.

Text: "This is he who is ordained of God to be the judge of quick and dead."—Acts 10: 42.

That Christ is the judge we commonly forget, although this is fully set forth in the Bible, in the ancient creeds, and in the noblest Christian art.

I. Historical and general view.

1. Christ took a judicial attitude toward the Jewish Church (as in Matt. 5: 23); he declared that the Spirit would come to "convict the world" (John 16: 8); the spirit of his

teachings abolished ancient slavery, infanticide, and gladiatorial shows, and elevated woman and marriage.

2. Against stormy protesting of priestcraft and kingcraft, Christ is the judge of modern civilization, advancing liberty, abolishing the duel, mitigating war, and making judicial punishment humane.

3. In the world of thought Christ humanizes theology.

II. Personal and practical view.

1. His judgment-seat is present in all the world about us and in all our hearts.

2. His living presence makes neutrality toward the right impossible. To stand neutral is to insult the judge.

3. He calls us to work in carrying out his judgment of sin and commands of reform.

4. His judgment in us and around us is necessary before his salvation can be effective.—Rev. J. M. Whiton.

THE JOY OF THE GOSPEL.

Text: "Behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people."—Luke 2:10.

The common gladness of the Christmas season is a natural and in some measure instinctive expression of a profound spiritual fact which lies back of all intelligent joy of men.

I. The coming of Christ brings light into hearts before dark with sin and despondency. Suicide was common and honored among cultivated Romans, but the Gospel showed a life worth living.

II. It brings a glad answer to the earnest longings and inquiries of hearts diligently seeking the right way. There were ancient "seekers after God," and Christ showed them the way.

III. It brings order and hope into the efforts of men trying to be saved and to save others.

IV. Different national traditions lead men into different ways of thinking and working, but all people have conscience and some thoughts of God, and Christ stands a light where their best inquiries become one.

V. The intercourse of nations is hostile in war and selfish in commerce, but Christ makes it loving and joyful in justice and Christian benevolence.

VI. The larger hopes of the world and the grandest efforts of good men find in Christ their most sympathizing and helpful answer. He works, as good men have always worked for the world, and shows them how to win true success in his salvation.—Author unknown.

THE BABE IN THE MANGER.

Text: "And they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in the manger."—Luke 2:16.

I. I am sure one lesson for life the manger-cradle of our Lord should teach us is, that a true life does not consist in what one has outwardly, but in what one is inwardly; that it

can never be so great a question what we have, as what we are.

Did you ever think that of all the millions of human beings who have been born into this world, Christ is the only one with whom it was a matter of choice into what condition he should be born? We wake to consciousness and find ourselves born, and must receive what parentage and heritage has been ordered for us. It belonged to Christ alone to choose his birth condition. And no babe lay in a lowlier cradle than that in which Christ chose to be laid in. And yet—not less in the manger at Bethlehem, or in the carpenter's shop at Nazareth, or a homeless wanderer, or upon the cross of the criminal, was he the Son of God!

II. Can any lesson for you and me be more evident than this—taught by the manger-cradle and the life of which it was the earthly vestibule—that to win a true and noble soul is the main thing, that being is a grander thing than having? Yet one of the most difficult lessons in life to learn is this of the superior value of internal treasure. Too often the simple fact that a man has risen to some place of worldly power covers and excuses the crooked tricks he made in getting there. Too often the question on the street is—not what is the man worth in heart-treasure, but in hand-treasure; not has the man integrity and purity, but has the man houses and stocks and bonds? It can never be so great a question what we have as what we are. That is the lesson for us from him who, for our sakes, chose the manger-cradle and the rude cross, and who was all the time the Son of God, both in the manger and on the cross.

III. Another great lesson for life the manger-cradle teaches us is, that love is mightier than power. The central man of the time when Jesus lay in the manger-cradle was the Emperor Augustus. His word was law. Since time began no monarch had sat upon so grand a throne. Where his eagles flew there might not be a whisper of dissent. His throne was iron—he was crowned imperial power. What did he care that that babe lay in a manger in Bethlehem in despised Judea? But where now is the power of Augustus? Time has shattered it. The name at which the nations trembled carries no more authority. But the babe in the manger-cradle, lying there for love, is more and more ruling the ages. Not waning is he, but waxing, because he is utmost proof and instance of a limitless, sacrificial love.

IV. But, again, that manger-cradle is suggestive of a searching test for the heart and life of every one of us. That babe is the Son of the Highest. He was before all worlds. By him the worlds were made. Why, when he comes to his own world, must he lie in such a lowly cradle? Why can Mary find no better place than the manger in which to lay her babe? "There was no room for them in the inn"—the inn was all pre-occupied. Is that true of your heart and life? You have room for business, pleasure, social engagements, study, idleness, a careless thoughtlessness, prayerlessness, passion, some cherished life plan, but no room for Christ—is this true of you? Yet, though your heart be as unworthy

for Christ's using and tarrying as was that manger-cradle for the resting place of his infancy, he will not refuse to occupy, cleanse, enrich it, any more than his infancy refused the manger-cradle. Your unworthiness need not deter you from offering even your heart and life to him for his indwelling. Do not let such a gracious Christ be crowded out.—Rev. Wayland Hoyt, D. D.

THE CHRISTMAS TRUTH.

Text: "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us."—John 1: 14.

It is an Eastern story—whether fact or fable it matters not—which tells of a dying ruler who sent a message to his people announcing that his son would succeed him on the throne and asking on his behalf their loyal allegiance. This they readily promised, and, afterwards, gladly gave, for they found that the rule of the new king was beneficent and gracious. All the influences that streamed forth from the royal palace worked for the weal of the people. All marvelled at the king's knowledge of their condition and needs and wondered how it was that he understood them so well. A deep love for their new king moved all the people and a great longing to see him took possession of them. They went one day to the palace gate and said: "Let the king suffer us to see his face." The king came forth in his royal robes, and when the people saw him they rejoiced and cried: "We know thy face." While a prince, he had moved incognito among the people. He had walked so often with them as their friend and had shown such love and kindness to all that he won their hearts. Now, when they saw him in the palace, his kingly robes did not disguise him. The king came to the palace gate and they knew him.

The Eastern story feebly illustrates a world-wide fact. In the Incarnation, our King came to the palace gate and let man look upon his face. "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, glory as of the Only Begotten from the Father), full of grace and truth."

God was in this world before the Incarnation, ruling in wisdom and love. But the world did not know him. The Light shined in the darkness, but the darkness comprehended it not. Then in one gleaming flash the Light broke upon the world's darkness as when, on some still summer night, the lightning fills the sky with its broad, swift blaze. "Round the cape of a sudden comes the sun." There it is—there it glows; at a glance we have taken it all in. In one event the Light breaks upon the world. Christ is born. Heaven breaks into song, the night shivers over wondering shepherds. Men tingle to their last drop of blood over the splendor of the new Reality, the earth throbs with a new joy and every fiber of human nature quivers under the thrill. The King has come to his palace gate and men look upon his face. That is what the Incarnation means—God's answer to man's imperious cry: "Let us see the King."

The manger-cradle of Bethlehem holds the thought and reverence and hope of humanity. The One Birthday which the nations and the ages celebrate is the birthday of Jesus—name

about which center the fondest thoughts and the brightest hopes of humanity.

"Sweetest name on mortal tongue,
Sweetest note in Seraph's song,
Sweetest carol ever sung,
Jesus, Blessed Jesus!"

—Rev. John F. Carson, D. D.

THE CHRISTMAS VISION.

Text: "And when they saw the star they rejoiced with exceeding great joy."—Matt. 2: 10.

I. Christmas is a hilltop to which we may climb out of the narrow valley of our common life and from which we may get a wider outlook. We need nothing more than such a vision to give us new thoughts of the larger world in which we are living.

Artists tell us that a picture with no sky in it, with only earth, always wants something. A life with no heaven in it, with only this world, its hopes, its joys, its inspirations, always lacks the elements of noblest grandeur. Yet the burdens, the toils, the cares, the struggles, the trials, which fill up the days and nights of most of us, tend to make life narrower for us and to keep us in the low, dusty vales, where we get but few glimpses of the deep, wide, open sky. One reason why our Sundays are given to us is to lead us up out of our dull earthly rounds, once in seven days, to a hilltop where we can get glimpses of the blue heavens, so that we shall not forget God and the things of the better world. Christmas also gives us an opportunity for a very wide vision. It tells of the wonderful love of God. It is a day bright with divine revealing. It is a day, too, of lofty inspirations, for it calls us to all the best things of life.

Yet, to many people Christmas seems to mean but little. They think of it only in a selfish way, as a time for receiving gifts; or they see it only in its holiday aspect, as a day of festivity. It rises to no high level in their thought. It brings to them no sweet memories of the birth of the world's Redeemer. It speaks to them no message of divine love. But to enjoy a merely secular Christmas, without having one's heart warmed and blessed by the tenderness with which a true thought of the day throbs, is to miss its real meaning.

II. One part of the outlook we get from this mountain window is a vision of God's love. This is the great central meaning of Christmas. "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son"—that was the meaning of the birth of Jesus Christ. That is the revelation which has been blessing and transforming the world through these centuries.

III. Another part of the larger vision which Christmas gives is the truth of human brotherhood. In our daily task-work we are kept so intent on our own affairs and so occupied in providing for our own wants that we are in danger of forgetting that there are other people and that they are our brothers. From our mountain-top we look over wide areas and see the smoke from countless chimneys and have glimpses of others' homes and fields. Thus we are taken out of ourselves and our thought of life is widened and ennobled.

IV. Then, this far vision from the Christmas summit exalts all duty and all service for us. Earth and sky blend in our view and the darkest spots in the deep valleys are glorified by the blue of heaven that flows down into them. God is with us in our common walks and in our human experiences—that is what Christmas tells us—Emmanuel, God with us. Thus the dulllest spot of earth, in the Christmas revealing, is made bright with the brightness of God's presence and the narrowest lot of earth widens out until it merges into the infinitude of heaven.—Rev. J. R. Miller, D. D.

KEEP SIGHT OF THE STAR.

"No one who has read Ben Hur will ever forget that matchless opening, the account of the journey of the wise men to Bethlehem. At one time they lose sight of the star, but again it flames out before them and they cry as with one voice, 'The star! The star! God is with us!' In the spirit of that scene we may be very sure that God will be with us during the coming year if we can keep with us the Christmas star and what it signifies."

THE DIVINE-HUMAN TOUCH.

"In Madagascar a poor woman was hobbling along. She was a leper, and had lost all her fingers and toes from the horrible disease. The children were shouting after her, 'A leper! A leper!' but a missionary stepped up to her and laid her hand upon the leper's shoulder and asked her to sit down beside her on the grass. The woman began to sob, and said between her sobs, 'A human has touched me. For seven years no one has touched me!' That is what the Incarnation means. It is God's hand reaching into and touching humanity, all foul with the leprosy of sin."

THE FIRST CHRISTMAS.

"The message of the angels to the shepherds was the first gospel service ever held. It was a small audience, but a ready one, and the preaching was done by the host of heavenly beings. The sermon was short and very much to the point. The choir was the finest ever heard. The result of the service was one to be desired for every gospel service, for the shepherds went at once to seek Christ."

THE HALLOWING PRESENCE.

"The heathen used to hold as sacred certain places where their gods had appeared, as they thought. But Christ's coming has hallowed the whole globe, because it shows us that the loving Father is everywhere."

THE CHRISTMAS RANSOM.

"American Christians were glad to pay \$80,000 for the ransom of Miss Stone; the Chicago millionaire was glad to pay Dr. Lorenz \$30,000 to cure his crippled child. These are only illustrations of the way the Christmas spirit works, for Christmas is the Father so eager to redeem his children that he was glad to pay as the price the most precious possession he had."

THE UNENDING STORY.

"Once Mr. Moody, after preaching on the subject, 'Christ as a deliverer,' said to a

Scotchman as he walked away, 'I did not finish the subject.' 'Ah, man!' answered the Scotchman, 'ye didn't expect to finish, did ye? It will take all eternity to finish telling what Christ has done for man.' No wonder the angels sang at the beginning of the story."

CHRISTMAS EVERY DAY.

"Dr. John Clifford, the famous English Baptist clergyman, says that Christmas may be summed up in one word, 'Emmanuel,' 'God with us.' And therefore if a soul always has God with it, then to that soul Christmas is always present."

CHRIST'S HUNGER.

"Mr. Robert E. Spear says, very strikingly, 'This same Jesus, who once gave so liberally, is now in want.' Mr. Spear means that Christ identifies himself with all the sorrow and suffering of the world. Whatever we do for the hungry and the poor we do to him. It is not a mere metaphor; it is because Christ actually suffers with his suffering children."

THE CHRISTMAS MESSAGE PERSONAL.

"The angels' message came not to the world at large, but to each individual shepherd. 'Unto you,' the angels said, 'is born this day a Saviour.' No one can really hear the Christmas message except in just that way. It is all in vain that it comes to all men besides, unless it comes personally to you, to me."

GOD RUNS TO MEET US.

"There is a close connection between the Christmas story and the parable of the Prodigal Son. The world before Christ came was like the Prodigal feeding upon husks after having wasted its substance in riotous living. And Christ's coming was like the father running to meet the son when he was a great way off, and falling on his neck and kissing him."

MONEY IN REAL ESTATE.

On pages 147-8-9-50-51, of this issue, appears the advertisement of W. M. Ostrander, outlining a new real estate operation near Chicago.

It is a generally acknowledged fact that real estate is the safest investment, and if well selected pays a larger profit than almost anything else. If any of our readers are looking for a good investment they would do well to give Mr. Ostrander's advertisement a careful reading.

There is, perhaps, no city in the country where real estate values have increased so rapidly as Chicago. In fact many men who had the foresight to invest their money there are today independently wealthy. The particular advantage in favor of Chicago Highlands lies in the fact that it is an industrial suburb. Many residential suburb booms prove disappointing to the investor for the reason that the city does not always grow in the direction of the land boomed. Chicago Highlands, being an industrial suburb, with excellent railroad facilities, is an investment that appeals to the most conservative, because it has its own industries which will attract a permanent population. It is therefore not dependent on outside conditions to make building lots valuable. The enterprise is backed by some of the most capable and wealthy men in the United States. The printed matter Mr. Ostrander issues shows interesting facts and figures and we strongly urge our readers to write for it and take advantage of this unusual investment opportunity. If contemplating any investment, there is nothing better than this one.

Present-Day Problems.

THE SUNDAY EVENING SERVICE.

Continued from November Current Anecdotes.

THE TESTIMONY OF A THOUSAND LETTERS.

By James L. Hill, in "Seven Sorts of Successful Services," published by E. B. Treat & Co., New York.

"I speak words of experience," writes Rev. C. E. St. John in the *Christian Register*, "when I say any minister, young or old, who has genuine fitness for his profession, ought to be as willing to face the harder aspects of life as men in other occupations are, and ought to be as patient and alert in bringing good results to pass out of difficulties as other men are. I believe that a young minister going to work in that spirit would win his way onward much faster than a doctor or a lawyer is apt to do; and if a new group of such would rise up within our ranks and render such a service, they would do more for the advancement of our cause, at the present time, than any equal number of our most conspicuous men."

Occasional expression is given to two things. First, to a fear that the church is becoming passionless; and, second, to a united statement to the effect that the present tendency everywhere is away from informal gatherings on Sunday night, and the trend is decidedly toward what we may call orderly services.

The pastors seem to be grouping most of their religious appointments into two periods which are in the earlier and later part of the sacred day. The attendance at the morning service of the church is larger because of the Sunday School, and the Sunday School, too, is larger because its session and the public worship are held in proximate hours. Men's prayer meetings, the gatherings of committees on devotional work, after-meetings, circles of prayer and testimony under whatever name, when held before or after a regular church service save time and help the attendance on the church service, and are directly conducive to the best results in the whole work. People are dressed for service and have time to attend it. Our correspondents speak of these initial meetings on Sunday night as "feeders." One pastor even styles the connection between the meeting of the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor and the evening service "a toboggan-slide." "Were it not for the Christian Endeavor Society we would have no evening service." Another calls his Young People's Society "a gang-plank leading into the evening service." Another recommends that the society be used as a leverage to secure evening audiences and then as an invisible choir, each one singing heartily wherever he sits, thus inspiring those about him. These young people are the cadets in God's army. If we do not break in young colts soon we shall have no horses. Nothing draws young people like young people. Another writes that he assembles all the appointments possible into

some connection with the evening service, as those who come to one, speaking broadly, are likeliest to stay to the other. When religious services are thus grouped into periods upon the Sabbath there is a double attraction to come through cold and storm. Most persons go out thus but twice on the Lord's Day, and have what Ruskin calls the dawn service and the twilight revival. When Societies of Endeavor were first organized their meetings were usually held on Tuesday nights, or some weekday evening, but now almost universally the meetings are assembled in some connection with the second service on Sunday night, and made preparative and tributary to public worship. Members are not tempted to stay away on account of invitations to parties, nor on Sunday night do they say, "I have my lessons to get for tomorrow." It is found by many pastors that there is a hallowed nature in the very day, that renders the meeting more devotional. Hearts are prepared by the previous services, and lips are made ready to express thoughts and emotions that have been suggested and kindled. The whole atmosphere of the day makes the meeting on Sunday evening more uplifting and spiritual. Many churches have a men's prayer meeting before the morning public worship. So when there is a spirit of prayer in the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor it produces a fine atmosphere for the evening sermon in the main auditorium.

Many testify that the earlier service is the inspiration of the second. I like a prayer meeting preceding a preaching service. It puts the young people into a spiritual frame of mind for the evening service. Evangelistic power, both laic and pulpit, is thus concentrated and finds an appropriate field. In most of these initial meetings held by young people a blessing is regularly asked upon the sermon that is to follow, which often inspires the pastor to put heart, soul, and might into the second service and to preach sermons that have felt the fire. The success of the evening sermon depends often largely upon the spirituality of the earlier service. Peter preached after Cornelius' prayer and as an answer to prayer. One minister writes that he killed off his Christian Endeavor Society, believing that it hurt his second preaching service, and now he has neither, and the last state of that church is worse than the first.

Dr. Charles M. Sheldon, pastor of the Central Congregational Church at Topeka, finds the solution of the problem in a large, popular young people's meeting. On Sunday night he spends the evening with them fitting them for religious and social service and preparing them for membership in the Christian church. They learn to pray, and testify under the pastor's care and in his company. In many cases the method is to have the meeting flow on in prayer and testimony, under a laic leader, for three-quarters of an hour, when the pastor, upon the same topic or upon any topic on which he feels that young people need the word of exhortation, addresses them for fifteen or twenty minutes. Some are so enthusiastic as

to incline to a belief that this method of training young people and church members will be widely adopted. A large company of people, mostly young and earnest, present because they desire to be, testifying and bowing in prayer, can become a great factor in the training, reinforcing, and enlarging the future church. With the resolve that they will recruit the church from among the young, their most hopeful field, very many pastors concentrate their force upon the young people's meeting on Sunday night. They merge all appointments in one and in it the young contingent predominates. This is popularly called The Merger.

It is evident that the generation which is now coming upon the field of action is destined to live in stirring times. During their day will probably be wrought out a more general and vital change in religious methods of work than in any epoch since the beginning of the Christian era. Questions that once were confined to a few extraordinary minds are now to be popularized. The voices of most men were lately but echoes of their chieftains. But now matters are so reversed that those who are leaders, only voice the popular sentiment, and proclaim what is in the hearts of the people.

In the higher education of the past the Bible has seldom been used as a text-book in our colleges and seminaries. The demand, strangely, is not now from our educators, but from the students themselves. Thirty men in one class at Yale, forty men at Amherst, asked in one year for an optional study of the English Bible. Sixty colleges will thus next year include the English Bible among their courses of study. The pastor of one of the most aggressive among the western churches has said that all the work of his church was done by less than one hundred of its members, while the other five hundred simply use its benefits. Now it is with a change in this condition of affairs that we are chiefly concerned. And if workers are to be trained, all experience conspires to teach that their training for their life work cannot be begun while they are too young. Ten per cent. of each church are responsible for the atmosphere and temperature of the same. The church is what they make it, and the ninety per cent. remainder use it as they find it.

The old Romans, who conquered eighty-five foreign nations, recognized the secret of success when they called their armies exercitus, bodies of drilled or exercised men. It is to gain the use of one's powers, to secure the exercise of one's religious faculties, that while he is young and in his most susceptible frame, he is drilled in a training school for the church. "As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings, so the Lord alone did." It requires patience, and the eaglets must learn to fly by flying. Many other pastors feel that the objection to The Merger is found in the fact that there is not quite enough of campaign about it. It seems to be found, in some cases, that the presence of older persons acts as a deterrent to the very young and timid, when they ought to be learning to testify. The young people ought not to have their meeting

taken away from them. Nor ought they to be too much embarrassed in their earliest efforts to testify and pray in public. Sometimes it proves that older persons who would drop into a broad, open preaching service in the church are disinclined to make their presence conspicuous in a meeting that is primarily and chiefly composed of members, and so absent themselves from the Lord's house on Sunday night when their presence might bring them blessing.

Domestic conditions have some influence. Such are the social demands that men and women complain that they have not week nights enough to go around. Some social and otherwise active people are found to have, in advance, all their evenings pre-empted. Clubs, banquets, evening dinner parties, entertainments, appointments, committee meetings, benevolent, fraternal, and other social organizations, and the more pressing demands of commercialism in these busy, hurrying days have so multiplied that men feel that during the week they have a surfeit, that they have worked under high pressure and they are glad of a little release of quiet and rest at home. In the matter of church attendance Sunday evenings, there is, of course, no can and can't about it. It is will or won't, and we are considering a change of conditions in the matters of time and energy and an address to a motive that will overcome apathy. Add to this rush of business, to this strain of the present age, a native love of ease and sense of luxury, a feeling of less dependence on the sermon than formerly, owing to the splendid fruits of the press, churches are met with a condition of things which is a heart-breaker to an enthusiastic pastor. The church has met a little keener competition than it formerly knew. A glance at busy people's calendars show*that the evenings are gone before the week begins. If a night comes when they can remain quietly at home, they want to enjoy it.

Admitting that church attendance ought to be augmented, the inquiry rises, What can be done? First, I say, by all means of influence open to the minister, develop the custom of paying wages on some other night of the week than Saturday. I should like to be dictator just long enough to decree that all employees whose wages are computed by the week must be paid on Wednesday night. It would be favorable to our Sunday attendance at church if wages in New England could be paid as in some foreign countries, by the month. Friends of the Sabbath ought to conspire and ask every household in the city to lay orders for Sunday supplies sometime earlier on Saturday. Turning now to the employer let me say secondly—do make shorter hours. Help the people toward a reform in this important matter. If in the drug stores on Sundays it could be advertised and understood that at certain and fewer convenient hours medicines could be procured, all needful ends could be met, and clerks emancipated, and worship at God's house more frequently enjoyed. But thirdly, the great and unapproached friend of church attendance is the Saturday half-holiday.

Give us in the interests of the church attendance a Saturday half-holiday.

(Concluded in January.)

What 45 Preachers Think of Current Anecdotes.

These are voluntary commendations, in almost every case accompanied by a year's subscription. All but a few of them quoted from our mail, within the past twelve months. If you have time to examine nearly 500 commendations from preachers of all denominations we will gladly send them. We challenge any other homiletic magazine to produce half as many.

In 1902 the general opinion was that *Current Anecdotes* was "Helpful."

In 1903 that it was not only "Helpful, but Indispensable."

In 1904 that it is still indispensable, but some are adding "The best preacher's magazine published."

WHAT 27 PRESBYTERIAN PREACHERS THINK OF CURRENT ANECDOTES.

A Presbyterian pastor giving notice of his change of address (from a church of 200 members to one of 500 members) says: "I hope *Current Anecdotes* will continue to be of as much help to me as it has been in the past.

T. J. Searles, Rose, N. Y.: "Current Anecdotes is a great help, not alone in the illustrations which I use, but some of them revive occurrences, when I was in missionary work."

Rev. T. R. Earl, San Francisco, Cal.: "The best of its kind I know."

L. C. Cooley, Jr., Walker, Ia.: "January number unusually good."

C. S. Beatty, Oakland Pres. Church, Pittsburg, Pa.: "I find the magazine very helpful."

Harvey L. Wyatt, Calvin Pres. Church, Philadelphia: "Find \$3.00 for renewal and card index system."

INDISPENSABLE.

A Missouri Pres. pastor says: "Though I am cramped for means I do not feel that I can do without *Current Anecdotes*."

Rev. W. H. Liggett, Pres. Church, Evansville, Minn.: "I could not get along very well without it."

HELPFUL.

Rev. J. T. Sullivan, Second Pres. Church, Findlay, O.: "As an aid in the preparation of sermons, I find *Current Anecdotes* the most helpful of any of the magazines that come to my study."

Rev. E. C. Armstrong, Third Pres. Church, Williamsport, Pa.: "I appreciate *Current Anecdotes*. It is very helpful."

Rev. J. C. Lane, Pleasant Unity, Pa. says: "I have found *Current Anecdotes* a valuable help."

Rev. D. H. Rohrbach, Seneca, Ill.: "I am much pleased with *Current Anecdotes*, and find it very helpful."

EXCEEDS EXPECTATION.

Rev. W. B. Lucas, Pres. Church, Buffalo, N. Y.: "I have been a subscriber to *Current Anecdotes* from its beginning, and have the entire numbers complete on file. I prize them highly. They are growing better all the time."

T. H. Peachell, Monterey, N. Y.: "It more than meets the expectation of every one."

A GOLD MINE.

Rev. Geo. H. Johnston, Ph. D., Norristown, Pa.: "The magazine is a magnificent help and becomes increasingly so as one learns how to use it to advantage."

Rev. Edward Warren, Washington, D. C.: "It is a veritable gold mine, or perhaps I might say a homiletic department store, where everything needful to a busy pastor can be found."

Rev. B. F. Hammond, Bridge St. Pres. Church, Catasauqua, Pa.: "I use it more than any periodical that reaches my study table."

Rev. A. G. Boyd, Friday Harbor, Wash.: "Would not be without it, very helpful."

Rev. H. H. Pratt, Portland, Oregon: "I find it worth while."

Rev. G. L. Richmond, First Church, Boonton, N. J.: "I commend *Current Anecdotes* whenever I have opportunity, for it is a valuable publication."

William S. Barnes, First Pres. Church, Council Bluffs, Iowa: "Exceedingly helpful, especially for Sunday evening sermons."

Rev. J. S. McGaw, Pres. Church, Mt. Clare, Neb.: "Current Anecdotes is always fresh, up-to-date, and useful. Each copy is a pleasure to the busy pastor."

UNITED PRESBYTERIAN.

J. Campbell White, U. P. Church, Allegheny, Pa.: "Send *Current Anecdotes*, one year, beginning with January."

Rev. James N. Knipe, Pres. United Pres. S. S. Asso., Philadelphia, Pa.: "I would not be without it."

Rev. W. J. Grimes, U. P. Church: "Think it the most practical of any magazine I have taken."

Rev. H. H. Bell, First United Pres. Church, San Francisco, Cal.: "Excellent magazine."

CUMBERLAND PRESBYTERIAN.

Martin G. Milligan, Pastor Cumb. Pres. Church, New Market, Ala.: "I am very much inconvenienced without *Current Anecdotes* and can hardly run my shop without it."

WHAT 18 CONGREGATIONAL PREACHERS THINK OF CURRENT ANECDOTES.

Ralph Connor (Charles W. Gordon), author of *Black Rock*, *The Sky Pilot*, etc., says of *Current Anecdotes*: "The publication is really a good one, and I think has a place for every minister."

BEST OF ITS KIND.

T. R. Earl, San Francisco, Cal.: "Your magazine is the best of its kind I know."

F. E. Kenyon, Wauseon, O.: "I have grown to look upon this magazine as one of the essentials in my study."

Rev. Wells H. Fitch, Jamesport, L. I., N. Y.: "Am pleased with a number of its features, but especially with the Homiletic Department as conducted by Dr. Hallock."

Rev. Chas. Herald, D. D., Bethesda Cong. Church, Brooklyn, N. Y.: "I think a great deal of it."

Rev. H. J. Wilkins, Fontanelle, Ia.: "Current Anecdotes is a very useful time saving help to preachers."

Rev. F. C. Krause, First Congregational Church, Douglas, Alaska: "Full of fine suggestions and helpful to me as a minister."

Rev. Daniel B. Wyman, Heath, Mass.: "I would rather pay double this amount than be without the monthly visits of *Current Anecdotes*."

Rev. Jas. H. Childs, Northbridge Center, Mass.: "I do not see how I could get along without your *Current Anecdotes*."

Rev. C. H. Smith, Barre, Mass.: "Of increasing value and do not want to lose a single issue."

Rev. Henderson H. Dunn, New Orleans, La.: "Think it's the best of its kind published. Shall recommend it to my associates."

Rev. A. J. Baldwin, Providence, Ill.: "The best and most useful of any that comes to my table."

Samuel B. Chase, Mayflower Congregational Church, Lansing, Mich.: "Have gotten great help from it the past three years."

Rev. James W. Cool, Bedford Park Congregational Church, New York City: "I found so many valuable suggestions that I am lost without it."

Rev. A. M. Wight, First Church, Ogdensburg, N. Y.: "I cannot tell how much I appreciate *Current Anecdotes*."

Rev. H. J. Wilkins, Fontanelle, Ia.: "The magazine is O. K., an invaluable aid to the busy pastor."

Rev. Josiah Sims, Nevada City, Cal.: "We highly appreciate the excellencies of your magazine."

"I would feel handicapped in my work without *Current Anecdotes*."—Rev. Howard N. Smith, Supt. Cong. S. S. and Pub. Soc. for Oregon.

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See also page 130.)

CHRISTMAS HYMNS.

(Continued from page 116.)

has been a favorite Christmas hymn for the last 150 years or more, having been written in 1745. John Byrom, the author, had several children, but, like many another father, he had his "favorite," a little girl named "Dolly." A few days prior to Christmas, 1745, Mr. Byrom, promised to write Dolly something for Christmas Day. It was to be written specially for herself, and no one else. On the morning of the great day, when she ran down to breakfast, she found several presents waiting for her. Among these was an envelope addressed to her in her father's handwriting. It was the first thing she opened, and, to her great delight, proved to be a Christmas carol addressed to her, and to her alone:—

Christians awake, salute the happy morn
Whereon the Saviour of the World was born.

In the original the MS. is headed "Christmas Day for Dolly." This very document is now preserved in the archives of Cheetham's Hospital, Manchester, and, though a little creased and crumpled, probably from being carried about in Miss Dolly's pocket, is in an excellent state of preservation.

This carol was first published in 1746 in Harrop's *Manchester Mercury*. Soon after it was seen by a musician called John Wainwright, and a composer of some note. He was struck by the words, and wrote for them the beautiful and popular setting known as "Stockport" or "Wainwright," to which they have ever since been sung. The composer sent a copy of the tune to the author of the hymn, who was delighted with its appropriateness, and this introduction began a friendship between the two men which was only broken by death.

"As with gladness men of old," though, strictly speaking, an Epiphany hymn, is frequently sung at Christmas. It was written by the late Mr. William Chatterton Dix about the year 1860. In a letter received from the author shortly before his lamented death in 1900, Mr. Dix informed me that there was little of interest to record respecting its composition. He was at the time slowly recovering from a rather serious illness. One evening, when he felt somewhat stronger than he had for several days, the lines of the now well-known hymn gradually formed themselves in his brain, and, asking for writing materials, he committed them to paper. The following year it was published in a small hymnal; thence it made its way into more popular collections, and today its reputation has become world-wide. The late Lord Selborne, who was a great admirer of Mr. Chatterton Dix's hymns, considered "As with gladness men of old" one of the finest compositions of the kind in the language.

The wonderfully appropriate melody to which this hymn is invariably sung was composed by Conrad Kocher in 1838. It has been suggested that Mr. Chatterton Dix wrote the hymn to fit the music, but this is not the case.

"While shepherds watch'd their flocks by night" has for a hundred and fifty years or more been the standard carol of the "Waits"

at Christmas time. It was written by Nahum Tate some time near the close of the seventeenth century, and first published in Tate and Brady's Psalter, 1702. There is little doubt that this hymn was the work of Tate alone, though in some hymnals it is ascribed to these writers jointly.

"O come, all ye faithful, Joyful and triumphant" is Canon Oakeley's translation of the *Adeste Fideles*. It is by far the most popular version we have, and was first published in 1852. It soon became one of the foremost hymns for Christmas and is now to be found in nearly all hymnals published during the last forty years.

This is not the only translation of this hymn made by Canon Oakeley. When he was Incumbent of Margaret Street Chapel in 1841 he made another and an earlier one beginning "Ye faithful, approach ye." This, however, was written exclusively for his own congregation, amongst whom it was distributed in manuscript. Many years afterwards, however, it appeared in one or two collections, though it has never gained much favor with hymnal editors.

Among the many other translations of the *Adeste Fideles*, which have been published during the last fifty years or so, the only one which comes into competition with Canon Oakeley's in the matter of public favor is by the Rev. William Mercer, beginning with the same line, "O come, all ye faithful." It was written later than Canon Oakeley's version, and the two translations are not dissimilar. In order that readers may compare the two, I give the first verse of Mr. Mercer's translation; that by Canon Oakeley will be found in any ordinary modern hymnal—

"O come, all ye faithful,
Joyfully triumphant.
To Bethlehem hasten now with glad accord;
Lo! in a manger
Lies the King of angels;
O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord."

A Christmas hymn, which is immensely popular in America, and growing in favor in England, is "It came upon the midnight clear." It was written in 1849, and first appeared in the *Christian Register* early in 1850. The author, Edmund Hamilton Sears, has also written another hymn for Christmas. Though not quite as perfect a composition as "It came upon the midnight clear," this hymn, beginning "Calm on the listening ear of night," is a very beautiful Christmas hymn, and deserves to be more widely used. Mr. Sears was pastor of various churches, and died at Weston, Massachusetts, in 1876.

"From heaven above to earth I come" is Miss Catherine Winkworth's translation of Martin Luther's celebrated Christmas hymn. It was written specially for his little son, Hans, when the child was five years old, during the latter part of 1531, but not published until four years later. No man observed Christmas with more punctiliousness than did Martin Luther, and he educated his children to regard the season with similar veneration.

On every Christmas Eve a festival took place in Martin Luther's house, and it was

for the children's use at these festivals that "From heaven above to earth I come" was written. Luther himself was on these occasions the master of the ceremonies, and for many days before Christmas he conducted rehearsals, training his children to sing the carol perfectly when the festival night came. The first seven verses of the hymn were always sung by a man dressed as an angel. When he had finished, the children greeted him with the remaining verses, beginning—

"Welcome to earth, thou noble guest,
Through whom e'en wicked men are blest!
Thou com'st to share our misery;
What can we render, Lord, to Thee?"

In early editions of Luther's Hymnal this hymn is headed "Children's Song from the Second Chapter of St. Luke. Drawn up by Dr. M. L." It is still sung from the dome of the Kreuzkirche in Dresden before day-break on Christmas morning.

The tune to which this hymn is usually sung is also ascribed to Martin Luther, but whether he really wrote it or not it is difficult to say.

"Of the Father's love begotten" is a translation of a portion of a poem by Prudentius, written in the fifth century. The most popular version is that beginning "Of the Father's love begotten," which is the combined work of John Mason Neale and Sir Henry Baker. The manner in which the two hymnists made their translation is interesting. Each translated the hymn independently, afterwards comparing the translations. The best verses were then chosen from each translation, and thus the hymn was built up. Each freely criticised the other's work, the result being a very fine hymn. I might mention that Neale had the honor of contributing the first verse. Of the entire hymn, Neale contributed five stanzas, and Baker four. It is usually sung to a very beautiful Plainsong, "Corde natus," so called from the first two words of the original Latin.

A hymn which should by rights be included in a section devoted to the season of Epiphany, is Bishop Heber's:

"Brightest and best of the Sons of the morning!
Dawn on our darkness and lend us thine aid.
Star of the East, the Horizon adorning—
Guide where our Infant Redeemer is laid!"

It is, however, year by year, more often sung at Christmas. It did not make its appearance in any hymnal until after Heber's death, when it was published in a collection of his own hymns. It has gradually made its way in public favor until today it is side by side with the same author's "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty" in point of popularity.

The manuscript of this hymn will be found in a small collection of hymns compiled by Bishop Heber, now deposited in the Manuscript Department of the British Museum. This collection, all the hymns of which are written in Bishop Heber's wonderfully clear handwriting, consists of two volumes made up of a couple of ordinary twopenny exercise books, which possibly belonged to one of his own children, for the backs are scribbled all over with problems in Euclid.

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IMPORTANT NOTICE.

Our volume commences with October and ends with September. The September issue each year contains a four to six-page cross-reference index to the seven hundred or more illustrations, also a textual index of them, as well as the 100 gists of sermons. You can see that it is extremely important that your subscription begins with the October issue. For the benefit of those who were not aware of this we have reserved a number of the October and November issues and if in subscribing you mention it, we can date your subscription from October and send you those two numbers, which incidentally are the best we ever published. CURRENT ANECDOTES, Caxton Bld., Cleveland, O.

A FLOWER FROM PALESTINE.

"The same airs are blowing that breathed on his brow,
The flowers he plucked are blooming there now."
—Palestine.

Many preachers intend to subscribe for Current Anecdotes when they get a sample copy, but delay and forget. As a premium for promptness we will send to anyone sending us a year's subscription, \$1.50, the same day they see this offer (clip it out and paste on your letter), a flower plucked in Palestine mounted on a beautiful card.

CURRENT ANECDOTES (Sub. Dept.), Cleveland, O.

The 1905 Cook Cruise to Palestine

THE MEDITERRANEAN, THE ORIENT

AND BIBLE LANDS,

ON THE S. S. MOLTKE.

This magnificent twin-screw Hamburg-American liner will leave New York, January 30, 1905, and will be the home of the fortunate travellers for 76 days.

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Write F. M. Barton, 706 Caxton Bldg., Cleveland, O.

Sermon Department.

A Christmas Sermon.

BY THE REV. MARK GUY PEARSE.

Text: "Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great the things the Lord hath done for thee."—St. Mark 5:19.

Jesus Christ had crossed the Lake of Galilee and landed on the other side. Here was a man possessed of many devils, so fierce that no power could restrain him. But as Jesus comes near he stands and commands the devils to come out of him. And they come out the same hour. The man, dreading perhaps what should befall him, begged that he might stay with Jesus. Meanwhile the people had come out and in great fear had besought Jesus to depart from their coasts. The Lord sends this man to tell them what things he had done for him. When next Jesus came a very different reception awaited him; this man seems to have opened up the whole country to receive him. "Go home to thy friends and tell them." So he had a home and friends, this man of whom we read that he had his dwellings in the tombs and caves, cutting himself with stones. Think of that home away in the little village, think of the friends; think of his wife; of his children; think of the poor old mother who sat fretting about him day and night. Ah, there are a thousand things worse than death. He who had loved wife and children so well, he who had been so good a son, and in whom the old mother had such pride, now possessed of devils, making day and night hideous with his cries, rushing madly hither and thither with the clanking chains! What a grief it is for the wife to speak of him! How she trembles for the children. How, when the night winds blow, she thinks she hears the madman at the door! Pity for him there might be, yet the very pity is almost lost in fear.

And now one day the little lad bursts in with the tidings, "Father is coming." The mother makes fast the door, and gathers the children about her and waits terrified. The old mother in the corner gasps with horror. There is a knock at the door, not the fierce and threatening summons that they dreaded, but a voice that seemed to come out of the past spake to them, "Open, open, and let me in." Timidly they open the door, and he comes within. "Jesus of Nazareth has made me whole," he cries. The mother stretches forth her arms to greet him, the wife and children cling about him. "Tell us," they cry, "all about it." "I scarcely know myself, only that he spake and the foul things were gone, and, lo! I was in my right mind. At first I was afraid to leave him lest the evil spirit should return, but he told me to come home and tell you all about it." "Praise his name," they cry, and heaven came down to that house and stayed there.

This is what Jesus Christ came into the world to do, to cast out the devils that separate men and that snap the bonds of brotherhood; to make hearts one again, and to make home blessed. This is no bit of the dead past, no strange story coming down through the ages, full of old-time notions. It lives in our midst

today. All about us at this hour are men who could love, who could bless and brighten homes, but, alas! they are possessed of devils. What homes are darkened, what lives are crushed, what hearts are broken! They who should be dearest are a terror, and a terror most of all to those who should be dearest to them. How many are there in this great London—men and women too—possessed with the devil of drink, for whom some old mother down in the country is breaking her heart, for whom night and morning a prayer is made with tears, and for whom there rises many times a day a sigh to heaven? I see the little cottage; the roses grow about it, but the cheeks are white and sad; in the garden the flowers bloom, but the heart is withered.

The Almighty Christ is come to cast out these devils. Thank God, many a man about us has been delivered by the Almighty Saviour, and homes have been turned from hell to heaven. Is the word meant for some one here? Has God guided your steps within reach of Jesus Christ? Think if he spake this word to you this day, "Go home to thy friends." How blessed were it if this miserable separation were ended, for that he has cast out the devil of bitterness, or that he has broken the chains of your curse. What a happy Christmas should be yours! What a glad New Year! Cast yourself today at his feet and entreat him. One of the best men I know told me that one Christmas Eve he had gone into a public house drunk, when the door of the parlor opened, and he saw the children round the fireplace merry with Christmas presents. He thought at once of his own children, and hurried back to find the wretched wife crying by a cheerless fire; and sitting on the bare floor, trying to amuse themselves with a broken toy, were his hungry little ones. As he came the children got up and crept frightened to their mother. That contrast broke his heart. He sat and wept in his miserable shame; then he kneeled and prayed with all his soul that God would help him. From that hour the maddening stuff has not passed his lips. When next the Christmas Day came it found a bright fireside, and the merry children laughed about him, and no home on earth was happier than his; and the happiness has lasted till this day. This is what Jesus has come for—to cast out devils, to make homes blest, to make friends glad in one another's love. Would that we could speak it to the thousands in this great city for whom somebody is sorrowing, whose memory lies a curse over some home. "Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and that he hath had compassion on thee." This is what the Lord is seeking for all men this day.

Then there is what the Lord would have us do for him. Perhaps there is no congregation in London where so large a number of young people gather as at these services. There are none to whom our heart goes out with more eager sympathy. I do with all my heart wish you a right merry Christmas. "Go home to thy friends." It sounds like a greeting from the blessed Master. Home, friends, happy

gatherings, with these he would enrich the world, who comes to dwell among us in gracious brotherliness. Be sure that the blessed Master has not come to destroy any home joy, nor any glad festivity.

Go home to thy friends. The scene rises before us. Good is it to see the dear father and mother at the table, and about them the sons and daughters gathered from afar. These are sacred seasons; make much of them while you may. With some of us they are things of the past, and now we in turn have to greet the home-coming. I charge you, I pray you, whatever you do, do this for Jesus Christ's sake: fill up the days with such loving service as shall leave a glad memory for many a day to come. Give them at home as much time as you can. Think how much we owe them for those years of love and care and prayers. You must make haste and work hard if you would pay it back. Here, in the presence of the Lord Jesus, I pray you go home to your friends and show them the fruit of your religion, first of all in love and tender service such as shall keep the heart aglow until you come again. Put that first—you are a Christian, and are bound to carry home sunshine. It is love that made the first Christmas carol, and love alone can celebrate the coming of the Lord.

Do not be afraid. This man who was healed felt that he was safe as long as he could keep close to that side; in the shadow of that presence: his authority could keep him whole. But to go home alone when he himself had scarcely grown used to his new life, to raise the expectations of those at home, and then to become again a terror to them, and, perhaps worse, again to find himself the slave of those evil spirits—that was dreadful indeed. And would they receive him at home; would they not be afraid of him? Or the citizens might resent his presence because his healing had so interfered with their gains, and they might be ready to avenge the heavy loss of their swine. But when Jesus said, "Go home to thy friends," it was all right. It was a kind of guarantee for his safety. It was the assurance that the grace which had made him whole could keep him whole, as well at home as anywhere else. In many respects this case may illustrate your thoughts and fears. You used to be so different that you can scarcely expect them to have much confidence in you at first. Or they may resent your coming if you cannot do as they do. Do not be afraid; the religion of Jesus Christ is not a dainty thing that is fitted only for times and seasons where there is neither conflict nor storm. Not at all. He will go home with you; he will open your way; he will give you courage and wisdom, resoluteness and gentleness. Only take him every day as your Lord and Master, and give yourself up to him to be his faithful soldier and servant. Be thorough and be true to him.

Beware of the beginnings of sin. Keep the temperance pledge: carry the blue ribbon. A bold avowal will silence temptation when a timid confession will invite discussion and perhaps angry argument. Do not confound innocent amusement with sin; on the other hand, do not confound sin with innocent amusement. Ask the Lord Jesus for the clear perception of his will in all things—of liberty, of duty, and

of service. "Go home to thy friends, and *show* how great things God hath done for thee." So the text reads in St. Luke. To show is often the best way to tell; and when the lips cannot find the opportunity the life can keep giving its testimony. This is what Jesus asks you to do for him.

And, further, tell them what great things the Lord hath done for thee. Do not think that means preaching, or bothering people at any time and in any way about religion. There are people whom I meet with sometimes who don't do me any good at all; strangers who, abruptly and without any preface, demand in a peremptory voice a statement of my religious conviction. It is a kind of "Stand and deliver" that one resents. There is a sacredness and privacy about religion which the Lord recognizes when he bids us go and pray in our room with the door shut. A man can be a light of the world without being a policeman's bull's-eye flashing out upon the darkness—a glare that does not guide, but only blinds and bewilders. One may be the salt of the earth without giving people a mouthful unmixed, as if it were medicine. Salt may be a good thing by itself, but it is wonderful how a dish of something nice improves it. We read of Noah that, by faith, "being wary," he provided an ark for the saving of his house. Let your faith make you wary in building the ark for the family. When you are seated about the fire begin to tell them about the London Mission; tell them what you think may interest them most; then go on to give them something of the sermon you heard, and let it lead up to the story of your conversion. If you can, get them then to have a hymn—an old hymn to an old tune, the mother's favorite—and then a chapter, and then prayer. No matter how poor and stammering the petitions may be if only the heart speaks to God in real longing. The very simplicity of it will be its effectiveness. Perhaps the good folks at home will be so much interested that they may ask the neighbors in to hear it, and very likely you will have a great chance of usefulness. Only give yourself out and out to Jesus Christ, and take him as your wisdom and strength.

But there is another fear that may suggest itself, and doubtless does: "I am myself so faulty and imperfect that I shrink from making any such profession." Well think how much the Lord has done for you, how "great things," and "that he hath had compassion on thee." Surely it is not a matter about which we can be silent, either through fear or shame. If you wait until you are perfect before you bear your testimony for Jesus Christ you will wait a very long time; and if you then begin to give your testimony because you think yourself perfect, it will not do imperfect people much good, for you will be altogether out of their reach. I don't want people who can fly to come down and teach me how to walk. I do not want to encourage imperfections, but I have found much help from the imperfections of good men. When a student our old professor of theology was a man for whom we had a great veneration—simple, childlike, holy—none had ever known him to be anything else, and that gracious and unflinching sweetness and beauty were to us his *natural* disposition. To such a man it was no trouble

to be always blameless. But one day it chanced that a student came in late to the class, and pushed his way to his seat. The professor stopped to ask gently why he was late. The answer was given somewhat flippantly, an excuse that aggravated the offence. Instantly the professor, who had been sitting, rose to his full height, until the big, massive man seemed to fill the room, stretching out a trembling and terrible forefinger at the offender. The great shaggy eyebrows were lifted, and the lightnings shot from his eyes. Like thunder rolled the words from his lips, "Leave the room, sir." We started in amazement, almost in fright. The culprit crouched away from his place, and left whilst that majestic figure stood there all ablaze with wrath. The door was shut. Then again the professor sat in his chair. But the storm was done. With a trembling voice he read the discourse seeming almost unable to go on. After the lecture we left only to gather in groups and discuss this wonderful thing. Presently came a message that the offender was wanted; and he hastened to the irate professor expecting an angry reprimand. But there sat the old man in tears.

"My brother," he sobbed, "will you forgive me?"

"No, sir; indeed it is I who should apologize," said the student overwhelmed.

"No, no, I am the older. Will you forgive me? I am very, very sorry. Say that you forgive me—"

The student managed to get out a word or two.

"And you must tell all the students that I have apologized, will you?" And again there was a pause for the promise.

"Now," said the noble old man, "I will go and ask God to forgive me."

Nothing in all that life, nothing in all his words, ever did us so much good as that. We knew then under that gentleness and beauty what fires burned; and every man of us had a new faith, and a new hope and a new love.

Go home, and tell thy friends what great things the Lord hath done for thee. The Lord go with you every one, and keep you true and loving and brave. Amen.

WHY MEN DO NOT GO TO CHURCH.

W. C. King will continue his series of articles on the above subject, the first one to appear in the January issue of *Current Anecdotes*. The cause dealt with first will be: "Some faults in the ministers." If you want to know what laymen are saying about present-day preaching read this issue. Frederick A. Gould, a leading pastor of Jamestown, N. Y., said in a ministers' meeting:

"I wonder that preachers are ever dry, that they ever lack for either texts, themes or ideas. A single article in '*Current Anecdotes*' (April, 1904, p. 427) suggested two sermons and a series of sermons."

This article was by Mr. King on the above subject. He has been collecting data for two years.

Prayer Meeting Department.

AUGUSTUS NASH.

FINDING HELPERS.

Mark 1: 14-20

- 1 When did Jesus begin preaching? 14
- 2 Where had he met these men before? John 1: 37-42
- 3 Why did he choose this time to call them? 16, 19
- 4 What did he intend to make of them? 17
- 5 Why were they the kind of men he needed?
 - (a) Were natural leaders Mark 9: 2
 - (b) Could get along together Luke 5: 10
 - (c) Used to hardship Luke 5: 5
- 6 What did they have to give up? 18, 20

A SUNDAY IN CAPERNAUM.

Mark 1: 21-35

- 1 How did Jesus spend his Sabbaths?
- 2 Where did he go this Sabbath morning? 21
- 3 What was so astonishing about his teaching? 22
- 4 What exciting scene occurred in the synagogue? 23, 24
- 5 How did he show his authority? 25-27
- 6 What did he do in the home of Peter? 29-31
- 7 How did he close the day? 32-34
- 8 What did he do the next morning? 35

HOW TO LIVE.

Matt 5: 1-12

- 1 How did Jesus believe men should live?
- 2 What is being "poor in spirit"? 3
- 3 What kind of "mourning" is this? 4
- 4 Why are we prejudiced against meekness? 5
- 5 How do men hunger after righteousness? 6
- 6 What is the difference between generosity and mercy? 7
- 7 Can a man be pure in heart? 8
- 8 Who are the peacemakers? 9
- 9 What can we expect from this kind of life? 10-12

JESUS AND THE LAW.

Matt. 5: 17-32

- 1 What was Jesus' attitude toward the law? 17
- 2 What was his idea of righteousness? 20
- 3 How did he explain the commandment "thou shalt not kill"? 21, 22
- 4 What did he say about reconciliation? 23, 24
- 5 What is his definition of adultery? 27, 28
- 6 How were men to treat the sin of impurity? 29, 30
- 7 What was his position on the question of divorce? 31, 32

THE HEALING OF THE LEPER.

Mark 1: 40-45

- 1 Why was leprosy such a great affliction?
- 2 Why was the man so much in earnest? 40
- 3 Why did he question Jesus' willingness? 40
- 4 What effect did his appeal have upon Jesus? 41
- 5 What did he do for the man? 41
- 6 Why did he tell him to say nothing about it? 43, 44
- 7 Was it wrong for the man to disobey him? 45